

HEAT

by ISA GLENN



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ON THE crest of the wave of easy-fortune hunters and reformers who streamed out to the Philippines in the early years of the century, came young Tom Vernay, just out of West Point, to join his regiment. His essentially imaginative and romantic mind, long suppressed at the Point, unfolds and flowers under the caressing influence of the ruins of the ancient Spanish culture. The terrific tropical heat and the subtle perfumes of the Manilan atmosphere are charged with alien, bewildering passions. Everything is strange, heavy with centuries of tradition—old and incredibly lovely. Tom's imagination is inflamed and the beautiful daughter of an aristocratic Spanish family becomes for him the incarnation of the illusive spirit of the Walled City and of his boyish romantic dreams.

Heat is the story of this tropical love affair, the sacrifice of a life on the altar of a passionate illusion. Miss Glenn writes from a complete knowledge and a unique understanding of her scene. Her satiric picture of the army life—its perverse stupidities, its malicious, gossiping women—is a devastating criticism of our very presence in the Islands. Here, for the first time, is a truthful and fascinating account of life in these remote and little understood dependencies.



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by

ISA GLENN



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TO
CARL VAN VECHTEN

PROLOGUE

VERNAY, leaning over the rail of the deck and straining his eyes through thick air that he did not understand because he had never before seen such shaking air, was remembering the first night out, when the fog of San Francisco had still been in his brain and the girl at his side had stopped crinkling her eyes into laughter.

"Would you girls who are going out as school-teachers do for husbands what you are doing for your country?" he had asked her. He had asked this out of the depths of his West Point training in talk which it was proper to use with young women; and for a moment the deck had been Flirtation Walk, whilst this pretty, laughing thing who leaned against his shoulder as the ship took the roll of the waves was one of those young girls who on Flirtation are all of a kind.

She had caught her breath; and the wreaths of fog had then seemed to float between them, had seemed to get into his head, had made them alone on deck. "Yes—if I loved him. . . ."

With his pride in the menace of his new profession, he had gone on to ask her:

"Could you stick to a man whose work took him into worse discomforts than you've ever known! Discomforts that might turn out to be dangers?"

And this Charlotte Carson had started laughing again. She did laugh charmingly, her grey eyes half closing behind

their golden lashes, her mouth a wide spread of teasing. He had never before seen a mouth which gave way with such abandon. She had brought this laughing mouth close to his ear, lest the wind blow her words away.

"What is your name? I just know your last name."

"Tom—" he had admitted. "It's very ugly, I know."

"I love it! I love it! I never before knew anyone called—Tom!" His name had been different, the way she had said it.

Along the rail, at the girl's other elbow, leaned the freshly coloured Richard Saulsbury, his second dear friend of the voyage just ending. For four weeks they had journeyed together into the teeth of the unknown. And here upon them was the unknown, sneaking up to fight for them with the sea breeze that still smelled of salt. A strong and heady, sweet and deadly scent was coming out to meet them.

"It's Ylang Ylang!" screamed a woman, excited that the scent was not bottled.

The sweet scent grew more insinuating. It crept through the thick air which one could see, whispered of other things which one would see when one landed on a shore that was not yet in sight. The scent was a part of this visible air that quivered and shook as the ship tore it with her masts. Other odours began to dispute the right of the Ylang Ylang; pungent dry odours that remained dry in a bath of humidity.

"Sandalwood!"

"No: tar!"

But Vernay began to know that the scents were from the chests of the Orient—treasure chests which the Americans

had come out to pry open, and look within, and grow talkative about, and go home and forget.

The ship veered, picking up the channel past Corregidor on the left to where two ugly black rocks crouched morosely.

"Caballo and El Fraile," the man who had been out before informed the deck. "It's the limit, the way the Dons tacked on high-sounding names to things that were like any old rocks at home. Seal Rock, f'instance. All of 'em just slimy rocks, and useless. But at any rate, 'Seal Rock' *means* something. So does the soldiers' name for that bigger rock with the two humps. 'Carabao'—that means something. It means the humpiness. But the Dons didn't care what a thing looked like. They just gave it a pretty name."

Charlotte laughed, and Saulsbury eagerly took up the thread with the man who had been out before, "El Fraile—that means priest, huh? How much gold do you suppose they overlooked in the Islands?"

Someone giggled, "Not much! You'll be hiking home soon."

Vernay wanted to take upon shore a clean imagination. But the passengers were shrieking that the whole thing was a joke—this old city that their country had captured. Their surprising young country which could capture anything, do anything, and respected nothing because it was so sure of this ability to turn the trick.

"You must let us know how much gold you grab, Mr. Saulsbury," one of the Service women was saying, continuing reassuringly: "We'll see you, of course; there are so few people in Manila. And a white man is a white man,

even if he isn't in the Army. We'll have to hang together, no matter what we are doing out here."

"Oh—" Saulsbury laughed, with his easy refusal to take offence—"there's a big business future in Manila. If I make good with this cement concern, building fireproof houses for the lazy natives, I'll be a rich man one of these days. And then you'll be proud to know me!" About his rather full mouth, his rather full eyes, there was greed.

With the smile of certain lean men, the old timer spoke:

"You're the sort that——"

"That what?"

"Oh, never mind! Wait and see. But don't take life too fast out here. The beastliness——"

"What do you mean, the beastliness?"

"It's all over the place."

The tall young teacher was sliding her arm along the rail until it could rest against Vernay as she shivered. "There is beastliness everywhere in the world. It all depends on the man who is with you." She sighed luxuriously. "Besides, what have we taken the Islands over for, if we're not to do them some good—to lift them up—to—to educate them?"

Vernay said:

"I don't like the way Captain Jennings talks. And I don't half believe him. There must be another side to it—a—a Spanish side? What do those chaps think of us; eh? I wish I knew."

"Well—we can only do our best, can't we? I'm going to do my best, in whatever school I'm sent to. That's what I can do for the poor Filipinos." Her voice had dropped on

the last words. "And it certainly is a good thing—the best thing in the world for them—that we took them." Her voice went up once more, assured, friendly with her conscience.

Vernay said:

"I wish I knew——"

The city popped up from below the surface of the water like a jack-in-the-box. It stretched itself in a thin line where the flat shore came to meet the flat bay, poked up a spire or two, came nearer to them and materialized into flat buildings whose outlines shook in their bath of heat. The blue water was heat, the white air was heat, the scents that came closer and fell more heavily and deadeningly were heat. Into this envelope of heat the ship steamed slowly, reluctant to near a shore on which not a building seemed to stand still. Outlines moved, quivered, protested at the heat. Wriggling lines sprung up from the ground, from the red tiles of roofs, from a blaze of some purple vine on those roofs. Vernay thought that this impression must come to him through the long continued motion of the tublike Transport, and pressed his hands over his smarting lids before he looked again. But when he opened his eyes they felt as if a hot iron had been passed too close to them. The water was scalding the sides of the ship, the sun was blistering the planks of the deck; and there was a movement of the pointing church spires which was as real as the movement of the pointing fingers of the masts of submerged vessels in the harbour and of the derisive fingers of the draggled coco-nut palms which grew in a double line along an avenue not yet showing distinctly.

Fingers everywhere, pointing, wagging, outrageously gesticulating against unseen noses. The spires themselves were wagging against the nose of the Church.

The ship no longer appeared to be moving. But the city walked to meet it. The water wet her feet, lapping at the edge of the Malacon. The tattered fringes of her suburbs waved to right and left of her, ran to meet the water and keep up with her, flaunted their polyglot gaiety in her grey face of hoary wall; but the city marched in the panoply of her past, and frowned with the Cuartel de España and shook her fist with Fort Santiago and disowned her mixed races; marched on the surface of the water to meet the Americans who came to stare at her. Vernay, watching, felt his heart turn over in his breast.

"Isn't it cute?" shrilled female voices in chorus. "Just exactly like the stage settings in 'The Sultan of Sulu' that we saw in Frisco!"

"It's so unreal that it's pretty," sighed Charlotte in his ear.

"Ah!" Saulsbury sounded as if he were smacking his lips. "Old stuff—those tiled roofs. My concern thinks they're no good in an earthquake country."

Charlotte nudged Vernay's elbow.

"What are you thinking about?"

He drew guiltily away along the rail; he had been ashamed of his thoughts which were new this day; he had been knowing why some women had not a friend on earth. Some men, too. Yet, these were his friends, these people who were preparing to patronize a part of the world which was new to them. Oh—absurd! Charlotte was a girl who was pre-

paring, really, to do a man's-sized job; she was not one of these old war horses who were staring at Manila with boiled eyes, staring smugly, complacently over that which their corsets failed to control. He must not let this new heat make him fractious.

"You can see the beauty of—all this, can't you?" he demanded of Charlotte. He vaguely indicated the dream city that flickered in the sunlight.

"Oh—yes, certainly. It's awfully pretty." She was as vague as his gesture. Then she ventured a roll of her eyes. "But, you see, you hear so many *funny* things. *Amusing* things. On my lower deck, you know—from the non-coms' wives. Lots of 'em have been out before. One of them said to me, last night—and she was bitter, you can believe!—she said: 'I tell you, this place we're goin' to ain't no place for a lady! Cockroaches that's so uncivilized they can fly like birds ought to and like they've no business to! I don't believe God made those cockroaches; they don't look to me as if He had had a hand in it.' Don't you think that was funny?" She paused a moment. "Things can be amusing, can't they?—even about a city that is beautiful? Beauty doesn't cut you off from jokes, surely."

Vernay was very much ashamed of himself that he did not respond to the hint of pleading in her voice. But the little city was walking closer, showing its now unveiled face of ancient masonry, its head-dress of useless old bronze cannons which bristled with a futile threat; and he was annoyed that she persisted in talking about the non-com's wife.

"That soldier's wife"—she rippled—"was absolutely out-

raged at having to come back, with her Corporal, to this station. 'Lizards droppin' their tails on me while I'm eatin' my dinner, an' leavin' those tails behind 'em when I chase 'em! No, sir! It was somebody else than God that made this little neck of the woods,' she always concludes darkly." She waited for him to laugh, with eager eyes still on his young face as he leaned beside her.

Saulsbury said:

"No need for those lizards, if they knew how to build their houses. Now, with concrete construction——"

But Vernay was not listening. The mystery of an unknown country was close to him. It would be all right, when once he had seen the city at which his eyes were straining; after he had seen it all—soaked in it—come to know its feel—he would again know that Charlotte was pretty, he would again be conscious that Charlotte was amusing company. But just at this moment her presence spoke too insistently of familiar things, and he did not wish to disembark with what he already knew too forcefully to the front. Home, with its hint of health, did violence to this whispering heat blowing out to meet the ship. The heat's breath was telling him that on land he would see a moat, he would see neglect that was exquisite, decay that was beautiful, a disregard for hygiene that spoke of the health of an ideal which had always lived—a giving way to enervation because that ideal was in no danger of being killed. Manila, with its odours in the sunlight of copra, of chinos, of the fine dust to which the steady working of the anai reduced wicker chairs—he had heard of this, and in a few minutes he was to see it

for himself. He had been told that at night he would smell the odour of all the flowers in the world except the flowers of home.

But the voices which around him shrieked their own impressions, their own recollections of this land that was beckoning him on became so insistent that he could no longer shut his ears to them—that he could not, except dimly, hear the whispers of the heat. Some nerve in his head became conscious of a soreness from continued pestilential assaults; his hands clenched against his friends.

“I declare—” from the chronically aggrieved Mrs. Jennings—“I don’t know why I’m coming out again! When I was out here before, I couldn’t sleep peacefully in my bed because I knew it was sitting in four silly little tomato cans full of water or of coal oil. And I didn’t feel hungry at a table that had *its* legs in cans; how could you? But I must say that when you’re full of ants—completely covered with ’em—an advance guard coming four abreast up your skirts, you wish to goodness you’d had the sense to put the chair legs in more cans. Never satisfied: that’s what you are, out here.”

Her stare at her husband was plaintive. But another woman muttered to a group:

“She wasn’t dissatisfied after the bachelors began to accumulate!”

Vernay, laughing aloud, realized that the little teacher was nodding “You’re sweet when you laugh; you ought to do it oftener!” and that Captain Jennings had broken away from the officers, who were prowling the decks rounding up their

families, to poke him with a sly forefinger and to inform her: "They don't laugh the year they graduate, young lady; they feel too old! Dicky—here, you rascal, you stick around now until we go aboard the tender. Where's your sister? You don't know? Well, for the love of Mike, go get her! What you standing there for, loafing when everybody ought to be busy? *Siggy!*"

Other officers were hurrying below to their troops. Wives were clucking children into groups, scolding, straightening hats, pushing large luggage into small fists. The band up forward had started playing their salute to the flag that could be seen flaunting above Fort Santiago. The sound of the band, coming with the sight of the flag, erased from Vernay's mind the ideas that had been floating out on the heat waves. He loved his friends again; they were a part of his country, and like himself they were under the protection of that gallantly waving flag; and the brave notes of "The Stars and Stripes Forever" were their battle-cry as well as his.

The Transport stopped her engines. She lost her steadiness of aim straight ahead. She wavered, and bobbed around, and made ducking salutations to the swarms of cascoes and outriggers that bobbed to meet her. The "funny" little natives in their "funny" little boats screamed up at the huger Americans who hung over the rails of the decks; and the big Americans could not tell whether the shrieks were complimentary or otherwise and did not care if they were abusive because "funny" people were saying them.

"I wonder if I'll ever understand them?" speculated Charlotte with her first qualm.

"You can understand those queer-looking fruits, at any rate, because you can buy 'em and bite into 'em!" commented Saulsbury.

Vernay alone, of all the crowded staring people, was silent.

Charlotte's hair was blowing forward in the breeze as if the hair too was eager to get on shore and start in on the job. She ran, with a lightness and sureness of footing that would have been suggested by her hair if she had not moved, down the unsteady steps with flopping canvas guard to where tottering women were massed together for a closer inspection of the fruits which blushed in the sunlight. From all of these women came the same ejaculation, "Isn't it uncivilized?" spoken light-heartedly in acceptance of a show, or shrilled protestingly at husbands whose profession had brought them to this pass.

"I declare!" gulped the Colonel's lady; "if I'd realized, Colonel, that in these two years since we left this hole the government wouldn't have got busy and built docks for us to step on to from the Transport, I'd just have stayed in Washington and let you see it through by yourself! . . . Ouch . . ." She settled herself in as dry a seat as she could find in the tender, and called the rest of her protest up to Charlotte on the steps. "Good luck, of course. But what I say is, that you can't teach the natives anything. However, if you want to waste your time——"

Saulsbury, at Charlotte's heels, chuckled: "That's the

view of the Army! Now what *I* say is that these dinky little blobs of land need some good, hustling, up-and-coming civilians to give 'em a future."

A supercilious feminine voice enquired, "Have you been out before?"

Charlotte's voice was high with excitement.

"Oh! Here's a boat for us! We'll land together! Three strangers trying to see a joke!" She smiled at Vernay, smiled at Saulsbury, smiled with a somewhat watered enthusiasm at the casco which now attached itself to the foot of the steps. When they joggled against the high wooden docks she smiled at the two young men as they extended their hands to drag her up six or eight feet, bump her against tarred and heated wooden posts, and finally roughly deposit her on the wide planks of the shed that presented itself as a pier.

"Hurrah! We're here—to grab, and go home in glory!" Saulsbury threw back his broad shoulders and grinned at the swarming natives who watched their monkeyish entrance into Manila.

"The poor, half-naked, ignorant things!" exclaimed the girl, condemning and pitying.

Vernay stared so fixedly at the vastly wide unpaved street beyond the banked shadows of the shed that his eyes felt caught in their sockets, stopped in their orbit of rolling survey, focussed on a something that he did not yet actually see. What he saw was a heat that could be looked at—visible heat—waves of it that quivered yard high from

the mud flats across the street; that shook, that curled, that swirled up to meet the air which did not contain them. He could see no buildings across the mud flats. Now that he was on land Manila was hanging off, hiding her face. But the idea that had fixed his eyes, because it had crept into his brain through the medium of the indistinguishable smells now close to him, was the idea of the old fort that he had seen as the Transport came up the bay—the old fort built by Spain and flying the Stars and Stripes. Clear, primary colours that humorously yelled their defiance at colours mixed on the palette of centuries.

“We’d better be getting on.” He was vague. He knew that they would be getting on to their several destinations: the girl to the Hotel de Oriente, Saulsbury to wherever the representative of the Rocky Mountain Cement Company should have arranged, and he himself to the Army and Navy Club where he could be reasonably certain of a room; but at the back of his mind—which he found that he was, with a new emotion, keeping shut to his two friends—was eagerness to face, alone, his impressions. The slow but frenzied movement in the street annoyed him by its invisible hands which held him back. High-pitched voices; high pitch of colour in garments; high pitch of movement that seemed not to get anywhere and never to clear the street of the same vehicles. A boiling of the same objects in the same heat waves. A sprinkling of the same dust that had the moment before risen and subsided. Eternal shifting of the same people, everlasting sound of the same voices. Futile-

ity that yet meant stability; movement that was in the nature of the static. Fancies crept into Vernay's imagination.

"Look at the meeting of East and West," laughed Saulsbury. A carabao cart, lumbering past on its wheels of solid wooden disks, had stuck fast in mud to which the sun denied a logical origin; and the movement which had seemed static turned into cessation which seemed a frenzied movement. Natives, Chinamen, dogs and chickens—and coming down on them, menacing by its sheer weight of white soldiers, a big army truck. Saulsbury urged his companions along that he might not miss a word of the guffawed comment which burst from the human freight of the truck. "Vernay, I got to hand it to you! The Army—may I be forgiven for cussing it!—is nearer the truth than our little friend here who means to educate 'em!"

The driver of the truck was easing his pride of race:

"If that wuz a native instid of er animule I'd bust the guts out of um!"

"However—" Saulsbury continued his commentary—"there are some fine little pieces of human flesh among these custard maidens; eh?" He winked pleasantly at a slim creature who gave him in return the languish of a full gaze, who drew from the folds of her stiffly starched pañuella a small wooden comb with which she added to the glossy smoothness of her hair, who gathered up her long skirt until a white petticoat frothed into sight, and who then with the most involved switches and tosses, the most skilful toe work on her heelless green plush chinelas, passed

out of their first view of the tropics. From her there trailed a scent which was spicier than the Ylang Ylang but which was not so sweetly insinuating. It seemed to have been left behind by her necklace of thick yellow-white flowers, and to connect her racially with the ghastly old woman who now approached. The old woman held out to them an arm all bone but beautified by its loops of flowers strung on threads.

"Frangipani—Sampaguita, *señorita*?"

The old woman's claw managed to toss a necklace of small white jasmines strung on threads over Charlotte's head which bent to receive it. A gasp of delight was the girl's answer. She seized her necklace in so greedy a hand that the waxy petals where she touched them turned brown.

"You see, we'd better not handle the natives roughly—or even the native flowers," said Charlotte gently. Her fingers on the bruised necklace were now regretfully considerate.

Natives, beautiful when young and terrible when so quickly old—Vernay had heard about it. He looked at the old woman and remembered the young girl who had passed; and he wondered if Charlotte's schools would make them happy when this withering set in. Were they happier selling strings of Frangipani and Sampaguita than if they sat in concrete houses reading books? As a little boy he had sorrowed that the Indians had learned better than to wear feathers. These natives liked to wear their shirt-tails outside—he could see that, from the impudent grins on the faces of cocheros who crowded their vehicles to the kerb. Cheerfulness in the flaunt of the shirt-tails of gauzy, wiry, plaided stuff—cheerfulness in the audacious transparencies of those

shirts which cut off from the brown bodies no whit of the delicious breeze. Why not leave them to their cheerfulness? Their heads were not shaped like the heads of white people; they rose from the round neck-lines of the silly makeshifts of those shirts without a curve in the back but with an odd breadth between the ears. The wiry hair of these men was like stiff and useful clothes-brushes; no sign of a crown or of a cowlick; it stood straightly and uncompromisingly up—a straight line to the top where it took another straight line to the front, and at the front the wire growth engaged in a fight for supremacy with the low brow. Vernay was conscious of irritation that Charlotte should worry about them. He sat behind his own cochero and let this irritation grow. The cochero, in climbing to the high perch from which he intended to manage his skittish little horse, had stepped with his splay feet on Vernay's polished russet army shoes, and had smirked at having left on the polish a smudge of the deeply yellow dust of the road. He had stuck on his head a straw hat woven in a spiral of green on white, and the hat had no band on the outside and no sweat-band inside, no sign that this was a hat as Vernay understood hats—as marks of decorum, nicely graded to one's credit, one's occupation, one's destination. It had, simply, fitted in with the flaunt of those unconfined shirt-tails.

The cochero with amazing skill contrived a loud crack to the limp lash of his long whip, and the little horse, walling vicious eyes, ambled with incongruous placidity through the eternal dust and the mud which was evidently eternal because there was nothing that could have caused it.

Into a nightmare of shifting dreams, beautiful and frightening, the little horse led the way. Along a wide avenue whose paving was all that civilization could ask, past a botanical garden that was a clash of discordant reds and purples which could not bear each other, so that their discord rang across the avenue at the menace of the city wall which reared, and frowned down into its moat, and jealously hid from such hint of the jungle its treasure of the Intramuros. A sharp turn toward this rearing wall, with the cocheró leaning forward to kick the flanks of the thin horse.

"*Síla!*"

A clattering on to a stone causeway, and:

"Not yet!" exclaimed Vernay. He was not ready for the immensity of the Intramuros. He indicated the further curve of the Bagumbayan.

"*Mano!*" obligingly bawled the cocheró, who from his dashless perch helped the horse's hind legs to straighten themselves out into compliance with erraticism. "*Más dinero,*" he remarked over his cool shoulder.

Slap—slap—went the light hoofs over the stone causeway and back to the white surface of the Bagumbayan. More blaze of colour to the right, more monotony of grey wall to the left, and always the Moat. Little ground as the horse covered in his jerkings, the calesa moved and the water did not. The water had never moved since the Spaniards had first let it through the sluices, Vernay believed before they had got to where the Bridge of Spain tried to catch the hand of the Bagumbayan. He was by now steeped in the breath of flowers. In an ecstasy he had asked the names

of the flowers and of the gay-leaved little shrubs, and had got from the cocher^o a string^o of saints' names; and then, as the names of the saints were being sung out, he had seen a most awful vine along the trunk of a Royal Palm. The great leaves of the vine were bright green and were striped with a white that seemed to be a bright white because it lacked the purity of intention of any white that he had ever seen. The awkward stem of the vine struggled with the palm, pressing itself closely to it as if with evil intent, holding to it, refusing to let the uprightness of the palm have its way. The vine was wooing the palm, but not to good. Vernay's flesh crept because the vine seemed lascivious. He tried to take his mind off the thing. "Oh—gardenias!" he almost shouted to the face of an old friend. The vine had made him homesick because it had shaken him with its suggestion of the strange. The thin shirt in front of him wiggled over lifting shoulders.

"*Basta!* The thing that smells, it is the *Jasmina Singapura*."

Even this flower which so bravely, so cleanly decorated florists' windows at home—— The long whip cracked.

"*Oy!*"

Vernay lifted his eyes to look across the Moat; and stared through a dark tunnel which led from the ancient gate into a little street on the other side of the Wall. Underneath rusty teeth of a portcullis, dodging winches and coils of dis-used chains; past what his reading had taught him was a ramp; into sight of colours through all of which ran the undertone of damp decay, colours drawn together in one glow

of a golden mossiness, in one bloom of warm masonry, in one vast enchantment of shimmer. Heat haze—moisture haze—mildew haze of upstanding grey unreality—the haze of old beauty. He was in the city that had so surprisingly popped up from below the sea.

The calesa grazed the corners of the buildings. The cochero pushed against the houses with his hands, shouting "*Oy!*"; the lash of his whip licked the walls on either side. Vernay noticed the wrinkles of time on the stained stucco. One of his suitcases bounced on his foot, bounced to the edge of the vehicle, hitched itself into the street.

"*No importa,*" said the cochero.

"Here we are," said Vernay to himself, as his clear flag jumped through the haze of age; flying over a building almost as ancient as the city wall, casting its shade down on rusted, bulging iron grills of windows, on a forbidding doorway, on a banquette so narrow that two good-sized Americans could not walk abreast.

Vernay handed to the cochero what money he had been told was proper and, going in, was conscious of an intense pleasure that he was thus to locate on the battered corner of streets with names such as Palacio and Santa Potentiana; and it annoyed him in direct proportion to this warm inward satisfaction that the cochero should rush after him, in an instant as frightfully angry as if worked up by years of wrongs from usurping Americans. He spun his arms above his head, and the arms took the same line that his coarse hair took as it erected itself with the power of the porcupine. He spat upon the coins in his delicate hand and flung them

after the young officer; they made a ringing sound on the tessellated pavement of the dim corridor. But the impassive, immensely fat Chinaman who had waddled to meet the newcomer, smiling with lips as immense as his body would warrant, murmured reassuringly:

"Maskee! He is only a goddam native!"

I

ONE of the most annoying things about life in Manila was that the American parties were given at night. Vernay would have preferred sitting in the crumbling patio of the Club, alone save for the lanterns swinging high up in the tall tree whose head, straining to look over the enclosing walls of the building, had for centuries been keeping watch on the life of the Intramuros. It was at night that the Intramuros smelled of flowers, tinkled with guitars, came alive with Spaniards who in the daytime were unseen but who with the cool of the evening dragged chairs out to the banquettes. The Southern Cross would then raise itself on one elbow and spy over the Wall, and all the jasmynes and tube-roses and oleanders in all the gardens of the city turned pale in the moonlight—only Vernay could not see them because the gardens were locked against Americans. The Americans could see where the Ylang Ylang came from, for it grew on insignificant trees which were yet big enough to be seen over the garden walls; but the secret flowers which smelt of the honey of Paradise—the odd tiny greenish-white sweetnesses whose name meant the quality that he groped for, being called the *Dama de la Noche*—were always in hidden gardens, and always sending forth their little, dainty, insinuating whispers of delights. Whispers that came in gasps, and blew away on the night wind, and came again; insistent.

At night, the heat which in the day was blistering turned velvety. At night, as if moved by the Southern Cross, the Spaniards of the white faces and hot eyes broke into throaty love songs in which certain falling cadences suggested a despair that during the daytime he could laugh at. Did laugh at; for he knew, in the day, that love would come to him with no despair at its heels. American love had cool eyes of laughter and a humorous twist of attitude; it was a thing of sunshine for the light heart. He knew that, when he went to his work the next morning and looked up at the flag so jauntily flying over Fort Santiago, he would laugh at his hallucinations of the night; but this knowledge could not keep him from lying wide awake on his bed and shivering with ecstasy over the falling cadences of love songs passionately sung to imaginary women by hot-eyed men. The Spanish singing voice moved him as he had not been moved by opera; in its high lilts was a clarity of meaning, in its sudden falls to huskiness there was the shake of uncertainty; and the songs came in snatches and broke off—for a deep laugh, or for the pleasant gurgle of vino tinto as it poured in a graceful high arching line from the spout of a porrón. Men who could sing of love and passion and heartbreak, and stop long enough to drink vino tinto—was not this the essence of life as the old races knew it and as America had not yet learned to take it? Vernay wanted to learn the lesson of taking life in this Spanish way, because it appealed to an awakening something in his mind. There must be, if he could find it, some emotion strong enough to twist a man's heart, to squeeze from it all desire

save the desire for more love. And possibly cloistered girls in forbidden gardens and frowning old houses of the *Intramuros*. . . . Charm was in this idea of the cloistered girl.

He was in no mood to go to the Colonel's dinner in the Cuartel de España, and he was in the mood for sitting in the patio, smoking and staring up at the gently swaying lanterns until he should be soothed from irritations of the day just past. But the Old Man was his own Colonel, and the invitation was in the nature of a command. The Old Man would never excuse the absence of a youngster; he was too afraid of his wife's displeasure. Mrs. Robins was in command of the regiment, as even the men in barracks knew.

Vernay, dressing in his stifling room, groaned and started shaving with the cold water that no longer surprised him. Dinner at seven, as it would have been in an army post at home. Number One Boy had told him that the Spaniards never thought of comida before nine, when the heat of the day was over and they had composed themselves for digestion by a drive on the Luneta.

The Americans out here, when all was said, were a parcel of homesick babies who refused to accommodate themselves to new conditions, he told himself wrathfully. The heavily starched braid collar of his white duck uniform pinched his already wet neck as he hooked it; and the enormous hooks were too big and too heavy for their job, and the tailors had sewed them too far back under the edge of the braid. He swore. To-morrow he would go around to those squirming little Filipino tailors, the *Dos Hermanos*, and try again

to make them see what he intended to have in the way of comfort. Who ever heard of hanging on to high collars in the tropics, anyway? These Spaniards, now—their collars were cut too large, and stood away from their necks. Not very neat, not military; but undoubtedly they could not sing if high braid chokers tickled their chins.

"I wish they'd start singing now," he began to think aloud as, still struggling with his collar, he walked to the *reja* and peered down on the *banquetta* a few feet below. But the Spaniards were driving on the *Luneta*, he supposed. "Lucky beggars!"

These American women—his thoughts ran—who insisted on giving "parties" clung to the traditions of home while fancying that they had become soaked in the glamour of the Orient. Painstakingly they searched the *Divisoria* market for food as nearly like the raw material of "seven courses" as could be found in a land where oysters were ripped open for pearls and then flung aside. They moaned because out here roses grew, feebly, in *majolica* pots, owned and tended by idiots who would as soon have sold their children as the occasional undersized blooms of these miraculous importations—and rushed grumbling to their quarters to torment into civilized centerpieces the frothy flames of the *Flamboyante* which they called the "Fire Tree," or the trailing *Cadena de Amor* with its pink flowers like sweet-peas seen through the wrong end of an opera glass. They covered the polish of *Narra*-wood tables with sleazy canton cloths on which embroidered dragons squirmed among salts and peppers, twisted between knives and forks, and toppled

the glasses over their ridged claws; and bragged that the whole dinner was "so queer, wasn't it? They'd got this linen in awfully good, cheap shops in China."

Vernay slapped his cap down on hair which was still rough with the unrestraint of childhood. As he passed the quiet sala de comer which still had its shades down against the sun, he sighed regretfully. The China boys used cotton tablecloths without a silencer underneath; the China boys used a centerpiece of huddled odd-sized bottles of vinegar, oils, and condiments which burned the throat and made the heat of the land seem less; and, upon the arrival of the dulce, with a noble courage they left the bottles in place for the next dinner. This was the costumbre, they told him. He admired this placidity of survival, through the coming of noisy reformers and uplifters from a new country, of costumbres which had been worked out to suit the land.

It was to what might be called the costumbres of the Americans that the talk of the dinner party drifted eventually, as it always did drift before the end of an evening of festivity.

Mrs. Robins, whose clothes hung on her with the dismal hint of having been brought out before the climate had started on the process of shrinking their wearer, was gracious, and so plainly held back from reproaching him with neglect that she succeeded in crowning herself with the laurels of magnanimity.

"I always feel so motherly toward youngsters in the regiment"—she had the trick of murmuring confidentially and at the same time loudly enough to be heard over the large

room—"that I just must go out of my way to warn them of pitfalls. It's my duty to keep my eye on them. Girls—well, you know what they say the climate does for men! Not that I agree that that's necessary and unavoidable. The doctors cooked up that theory because they are men themselves."

Vernay had known she would say this. All of these women said it. He smiled pleasantly. "If you mean native girls, I don't know any of them."

Mrs. Robins took this gloomily. "You've only been out a few months. And besides, I don't know that the colour of the girl matters when a young fellow is so far from home influences. You *must* make this your home, Mr. Vernay; you must look upon me as your mother—although I'm not nearly old enough to *be* your mother! But I'll gladly give you advice when you run up on the snags of this nasty little town." She lowered her voice. "I put you with Miss Carson," she apologized. "I had to invite her because her mother was an old friend of mine; or rather,"—she was hasty in her correction—"of *my* mother, for of course she's far older than I. But mind you, I don't vouch for this girl; it does seem so peculiar, her running out here to teach natives! Hold on to your insignia—she might get them right off your collar for souvenirs. Have you heard what we call these stray girls who make the bachelors give them things? The 'gimme girls'! Oh—you've a lot to learn yet!" She did not wait for whatever he might have had ready for her.

Charlotte had overheard, and soothed him by her laughter.

"Poor old thing!" was her only comment. "I don't mean you."

He stretched his long legs under the table. He felt like stretching his arms above his head, like taking a deep breath and purifying his body from the poison of words. The full flare of the light fell on Charlotte's face, and he sat staring at her fine skin which the sun had overlaid with a film of gold. She was a tone harmony of golden browns, now that this film of sunburn had blended with the little powder of gilt freckles which she had got, he remembered, on that morning in Guam harbor when they had hung too long over the rail of the Transport. He would have liked to paint her, if drastic training in mechanical drawing at West Point had not taken out of him the power to do so. She was a girl of the sun, of the daylight, and she was showing up splendidly just now because the light that waved across her face, as if trees were between her and the sun, was pouring from a yellowish painted gauze Hongkong lantern. The lantern was fastened to the stump of handle of a huge paper umbrella; and this arrangement swung above the table at the mercy of the breeze which puffed through the open concha windows. He looked up to see why shadows passed along Charlotte's face.

"Dragons, by glory!" he chuckled. "It wouldn't take me aback if the old lady gave us one to eat—a roast of it, as civilized as can be with capers and olives from the Commissary. You've got the trail of a lantern-dragon over your cute nose right now. It looks very pretty—really. That's because of your nose."

The breeze smelt mouldily of the Moat, and it kicked at the lantern-dragons, at the umbrella-dragons, at the linen-dragons. As it grew fresher with the advance of the evening it shook the flimsy tablecloth, puffing it up into blisters between the dishes. The breeze was Spanish. Its attack seemed conscious. A fine dust started from the top of the umbrella and sifted down the ribs and fell on the dragon-cloth.

"Doesn't it set your teeth on edge, this dandy old room to be insulted by Nagasaki junk?" Vernay, backed by the protest of the breeze and of the dust from a Spanish ceiling, put it to her.

A slight, puzzled frown appeared between Charlotte's golden brows. The look that she turned upon him admonished him; but he paid no attention because he was busy with himself and his disappointments that he had not before put into words.

"I did think"—he laughed at himself—"that I was coming out to armoured chivalry!"

"I don't feel that way about it." Her wide mouth was firm. "I mean I hadn't thought things, before I came out, that would let me in for disillusion. You can't civilize a country by whacking it over the head with the flat of a sword. That was Spain's mistake. That's your mistake." Her new austerity dropped from her, and she was rather merrily pleading as she went on: "And I do think the dragons are pretty!"

"Everything—everyone—is so different from what I had expected," he tried to make her see.

She smoothly misunderstood him. "It's so much better than I had thought it could be."

"Your native pupils?"

"Oh—they! They don't know a thing—just nothing. The sword, you know—" she came back to it—"they were held down. The Spanish priests taught them to sing-song their lessons, I honestly believe, so that they would miss the real meaning. Ever pass one of their own schools? It sounds like a hive of bees. The way they'd been taught!" She brought it out in a wail.

"But they were taught to beautify the streets by marching behind the priests on *fiesta* days," he countered.

"That's the only thing you see." The weight of silver spangles on her white net scarf was always dragging it down from her shoulders.

Vernay, watching the scarf being pulled up to her neck, said dreamily:

"Good tone—with your hair."

The silver spangles winked a shrug. Vernay, coldly left to himself, and looking over the crowd for whatever bearing they might have on this attitude of a girl who was out for reasons opposed to their own, was presently diverted from his intention by a rueful new thought. What Manila really was full of, tinged with, standardized by, was—women who shopped. The ladies' talk was being batted across the table, hitting against the sensibilities of silent husbands and bringing in most instances the smallest of reflex action.

"Oh, do you know," gushed one whose protruding eyeballs vied with protruding bust and together with her

asthma proclaimed high station, "I dug out of one of those loathsome *chino* shops the loveliest plates? But it took me until I was driven away by the *chinos* putting up the shutters for the *siesta*. It was the most charming pattern, of a blue fish curled around to swallow its tail; and I wanted a dozen. But they were so thick with a sticky dust—*chino* dust, not like anything else on earth; millions of years old—" She transferred her attention to the man next her and immediately became a prankish child, giggling and giving roguish flutters to her sparse eyelashes. Her magisterial pronunciation underwent its own change. "I had to sit wight down on de dirty floor," she told him. "I had to 'pit on my hanky and wash 'em off to see if naughty fishes wuz swallowing tails!"

"Born that way—man-mad!" whispered Mrs. Jennings in Vernay's ear. "But Mrs. Robins would put it down to the climate."

"The Major says I'll never grow up!" the asthmatic lady was concluding triumphantly.

Everything standardized out here—Vernay meditated. Strange scenes, strange customs, brought out in these women the valour for extended adventures in being young. Fat, thin—each wore, like a new cloak of which she was still conscious of the price, the semblance of naughty youth. Husbands standardized as well; grimly acquiescent in what they looked upon as the inevitable in marriage. Husbands glaring at wives who flushed under the glances, while their ample or meagre bosoms jerked up and down with a

temporary lack of rhythm. Husbands who did not talk except to each other.

"Mrs. Robins couldn't say a word against this bunch," Vernay ventured to the friendly Mrs. Jennings.

Mrs. Jennings raised her eyebrows at him. Her droll little face lifted all over its surface until her smooth, low-falling black hair almost hid eyes that seemed not to agree with what she might have understood.

"The climate, you know," explained Vernay. "These men don't look at a woman. The way they stand off in groups, before we go in to any dinner; and with the poor ladies huddled up in other groups!"

"H-m!" hummed Mrs. Jennings through a pursed mouth.

"They think we're all crazy, anyway," said a tall, red-headed woman across the table; but Vernay gathered that she was carrying on the conversation about shopping, and that what she really meant to convey was that the shopkeepers thought whatever the Americans did was wonderfully all right because wonderfully attractive. "... So I just slapped the money that I meant to pay down on the counter, and picked up the bowls and walked right out to the *banquetta*. And I looked over my shoulder, and there he was in exactly the same spot, looking after me with exactly the same expression he had had when I walked in. He didn't say a word, just looked, and stood."

"What were you buying, dear?" asked Mrs. Jennings with interest so intense that she let her face relax. "I didn't hear the beginning of it."

"Those hateful little pottery bowls for soup. *I* didn't want 'em, but Pow did! He told me that I 'all time blow *mucho dinero* off Capitán; all time *talkee mucha sopa*; much better gettee littee bowls.'"

Vernay noticed that at this moment Charlotte's rigid attention to her other neighbour had broken down. He plunged. "You don't grant that I am in earnest about anything, because I see that the Spaniards left behind their reign some very real beauty. That's what you've been driving at. Would you rather I took it like these people? Tell me."

"That is none of my business. The attitude of the Army—" she hesitated, harkening to the noisy singing of soldiers on the parade ground of the Cuartel. "Tell me this: do you agree with what they are singing?"

Above the high feminine voices around the table, he listened. Through the open windows, mixed with guffaws of rough youth away from home, there came the refrain of a popular air of the barracks:

"He may be a brother of William H. Taft,
But he ain't no brother of mine!"

"I don't know that I've thought much about the native side of it," Vernay told her honestly. "What the town says to me hasn't a thing to do with the natives. I can't help remembering that there must be a Spanish side to all this feeling, and that we're stupid—or, worse, just plain unfeeling, unsympathetic—not to give *them* a thought. You girls coming out to teach these little, measly, naked kids—men like Dick Saulsbury coming out to build up trade for the Islands—"

Charlotte gave him a look, opened her mouth to speak, and thought better of it. She fixed her eyes on her plate; but she forgot to eat. Thirstily Vernay drank the whole of the glass that the muchacho had refilled at its convenient place near his hand. The champagne was warmish, as the American ice plant ran a system of daily rationing; but it tickled, and relieved the dryness of his throat when he argued with Charlotte. He began again:

“—Missionaries coming out to start a Reformation . . . I tell you, it makes me sick!”

He stopped. That was one subject off which he had been warned by the Old Man. He was sorry he had disobeyed the Old Man, who was a good sort. His hand groped for his champagne glass, and the muchacho, hovering, dashed at it and again refilled it with the warmish but quenching stuff. It tickled more than ever, and made him feel benevolent toward this crowd of Americans. They were all right, even if they did not see things the way he saw them. They were not missionaries, at any rate. Any American—except the missionaries—might see it the right way if they stopped long enough to think about it. . . .

Charlotte murmured at his elbow:

“Don’t you think you’ve had enough of that champagne?”

She said it admonishingly, as if to one of her pupils. Foolish of her—to play schoolmarm at a party. To show his disapproval he motioned the muchacho to fill his glass again, and staring at Charlotte he drank it like a heel-tap. He was sorry that she would not smile. She had such white teeth. He started to tell her how white they were, and

how mistaken she was to shut her mouth in that firm, old-lady way so that the teeth could not gleam; but it was not easy to speak. The room was so hot. He slid along in his chair until he was nearer to her, and tried to show her that she was a pretty girl and had taken the wrong turn through life, that if she did not look out she would be as bad as the missionaries; and he remembered, again, that he must not abuse the missionaries—by direct order from the Old Man. So what he said, confidentially in her ear, was:

"The Old Man is soft about some things, isn't he?"

Charlotte was firm with him. "Look here, Tom—you must not drink any more of that stuff! You aren't used to it."

He felt aggrieved at this. "There you go"; he said, "always disapproving! You don't approve when I take the Spaniards' side, and you don't approve when I——"

"What?" she asked levelly.

"Oh, you know that all the Americans drink champagne out here. It's cheap." He cleared his throat. "Cheap," he repeated. He laughed. He thought that his laugh sounded a little silly, but that was because he was trying to be as the other Americans were,—to please Charlotte. "*Aren't* you pleased that I am falling in line?"

Charlotte spoke, her face turned straight in front of her. "You can't fall in line!"

"Oh—can't I?" He laughed again. "You wait and see! Just about as well as anybody! What *is* the line, anyway? What line does Dick Saulsbury take, for instance?"

It was some moments before Charlotte replied. She seemed to be puzzling it out when she did start speaking.

"I don't really believe Dick is 'with' anybody. I have the feeling that he is laughing at all of us. He got the concession for the new concrete school building; did you know? Well, I have the feeling that he is laughing at the use to which the building will be put, that he will laugh all the time he is making money out of it, that even his very real belief in cement is mixed up with his joke." She waited a minute and stated flatly: "That ought not to be the case with you."

Vernay felt sorrowful over this. "I know it!" he said. "I should not be going against my crowd, and I won't any longer. I'll promise you, Charlotte, that I'll run with my crowd. I'll start right now—this minute!"

His head was swimming, and that was because his arm was touching hers along the edge of the table. His foot, too, had slid sideways and was touching her slipper. He was touching as much of her as he could, and he was glad to touch her. Charlotte was a wonderful girl. He thought about how wonderful she was until it made his head swim more than ever, and his chair seemed swaying under him. He waited until the chair stopped swaying and he could look directly at her.

"Look at *me!*" he muttered.

His throat was dry again and he took the whole of the little glass of curaçoa that the muchacho had put beside him. It was thick and sweet, but it slipped down easily. He glanced around the table. This was a good crowd of people. All he had to do, in order to be happy with them, was to conform. It should not be difficult to conform. The

youngster across the table, who had been out a year because he had been the class ahead of him at the Point—he had been a nice fellow, when they had both been cadets; had hazed him stiffly, during his pleb year, but that had been conforming. The youngster across the table was happily making love to the girl on his right. The youngster was drinking as much as Vernay, and his shoulder was as close to the girl as Vernay's shoulder was close to Charlotte. The fellow had conformed. He was in line.

Attracted by Vernay's fixed regard, the youngster looked across the table and grinned.

"Great little burg, isn't it?" he enquired affably.

"Great little burg!" agreed Vernay, conforming.

"I know how you're feeling," continued the youngster, whose name was splashing around in Vernay's mind and refusing to come forward into his consciousness. Strange! They had had three years together at the Point. The name sloshed around and around. It had a lot of s-s in it. S-s were hard to get. Vernay was glad that he did not have to pronounce it. "It's great to be out of the Point. Liberty—you know! I felt that way last year. I know! To doff the caydet grey and don the army blue: eh?"

Vernay had it: the fellow's name was Simms!

"Simms!" he shouted. "It's good that you're out here!"

Simms closed one eye and left it closed while he regarded Vernay. He leaned across the table.

"'Ish your first Manila jag, old top!" Simms said joyously. "But go slow until the dinner breaks up! The Old Lady is looking."

Mrs. Robins was glancing around the table, on her job of collecting eyes. She said with acerbity:

"I shan't leave you gentlemen in here. I think it will be *much better* if you accompany us into the *sala*."

Simms rushed along until he was at Vernay's side as they walked from the dining-room.

"See you when we get away," he whispered. "Glad you have waked up. You've been dodging me."

Vernay looked at Charlotte from the corner of his eye. "I'm awfully glad to have found you," he said to Simms. "You look different, some way; I didn't recognize you at first."

"Older, my boy!" replied Simms. "A whole year older in fact and ten years older in actual experience. This is a great little place for aging."

Vernay's head had stopped swimming. He walked along on steady legs, shoulder to shoulder with Simms who a year ago had been a Cadet Captain but who was now a shavetail.

"In love with anybody?" asked Simms.

"Yes," said Vernay. Simms's question brought his mind back to it. He left Simms's side when they reached the *sala*, and joined Charlotte on a sofa which was pushed back from the groupings of chairs. He started in at once:

"I—I love you. Did I ever tell you?"

Charlotte looked frightened. She drew away to the end of the sofa.

Vernay said:

"Yes, I do! I do, very much. But you're so hard to manage."

"Is it necessary to try to manage a person—when you love the person?" Her voice was very low. "I don't believe that."

Vernay leaned back in his own corner of the sofa. The sofa was rattan, set in a carved frame of Narra, and it was uncomfortable. He looked around at the dinner party, who had settled themselves in the grouped chairs and were taking up their talk where they had left it upon rising from the table. He was aware that a hot sensation was creeping up from his feet, working into his spine, reaching his chest. When it reached his head, his head would again swim in that unpleasant way, his ears would again ring so that he would be uncertain what Charlotte was saying. The talk buzzed around the room. The men, grouped off by themselves, buzzed. The heat of the room audibly buzzed. There were waves of heat rolling up to his brain, rolling down again. . . . He waited until one of the waves had rolled down from his head and hurried to say to Charlotte—before it should roll back——

"You don't believe that I love you? Then I'll make you believe it! . . ." The high tide of the wave reached his head—and ebbed, while he held to the arm of the sofa. "Won't you smile? Your teeth are so white. . . . Such white teeth. . . ." The room took a large whirl to the left, whirled back. He sat rigid, wondering if the room would right itself. It did. He said what he had to say over again, so that there would be no mistake about it. "*I said*, such white teeth," he insisted.

And she laughed. "You didn't say it; it was the woman over there who has been saying it, over and over!"

But that was all nonsense! He had himself said it, very loudly.

But he looked where she pointed. A skinny woman was preening from the end of a neck as long as the unmanageable handle of her Hindoo fan.

"Such white teeth!" the scraggly woman was saying. "I never saw anything so awful as an East Indian smile—all teeth! I like the *chinos'* long yellow teeth better—not so startling. This black creature with the smile just simply held me up! I had to pay *exactly what he asked* for this fan!"

Vernay passed his hand over his damp brow. "I must have been hearing so much of it that it got into my brain," he explained aloud but to himself.

"It's an army brain you've got," said Charlotte ungraciously.

"No, no."

But he startled himself by saying that.

His desire to touch Charlotte had passed. He was a little chilly, and very tired. He wondered when this dinner party would break up. The groups were shifting, drifting around the room, trying chairs that were as uncomfortable as those which they had left. Mrs. Jennings and a large handsome woman had seated themselves near the sofa on which Charlotte and Vernay lingered; they sat on the edges of their chairs to finish whatever they had been fiercely fighting out.

Mrs. Jennings, under pretence of arranging her filmy skirt, leaned toward the sofa.

"Listen to this," she nudged into Vernay's consciousness. "And don't let it discourage you, if you have designs on the lady. When they start in talking this way they go fast at the end. By the time she has worn out the last of her American corsets and has got down to Manila's best Spanish, she'll be melting to the men!"

In the ruthlessness of her onslaught on Mrs. Jennings, in her magnificent holding of the spotlight, the woman in question was displaying the firmness of a drill sergeant. "I don't feel that any part of the world in which I might chance to find myself could ever get me away from the finer feelings of the United States. I don't really feel that I could become less of a lady in any place. I feel so sure that what has been born in one—if it *was* born in one!—can't give way to temptation, even if the climate is enervating. Of course, the going to pieces of one's moral standards is mainly a question of the proper amount of clothing." She looked meditatively at Mrs. Jennings' bare thin shoulders, but condoned: "In the evenings, of course. But when it comes to some of the sights I've seen on the Escolta in the broad light of day, where the natives could see them! American women, too—*army* women!"

Mrs. Jennings murmured:

"It's so hot, even early in the mornings."

"One might stand it as well as the Spanish ladies do," the drill sergeant came back. "At any rate, those dressing

sacques of theirs are opaque. And their skirts are always a decent black, and *thick*."

"Did you ever look at their legs?" asked Mrs. Jennings with interest. "No stockings in the mornings; bare ankles sticking out of native plush *chinelas*. Gone native—in the mornings; that's what it comes to. White again in the evenings." She was once more leaning forward, close enough to nudge Vernay with her thin elbow. "Now *we* don't go native. We put on low-cut clothes and show our skin and stay white all the twenty-four hours."

Vernay was sure that he saw what Mrs. Jennings meant. She gave her vigorous little nod in reply to what he volunteered. "That is precisely what I mean," she said. "You're getting the idea. Go on as we go at home."

II

AT the last, when the roundabout motion in his head had got better, the muchacho came into the sala carrying a tray of tall glasses ranged in a circle around bottles of Scotch whisky and Tan San. Ice clinked against the sides of the tall glasses, which had frosted. The colour of the whisky was cool to look at, the sparkle of the tiny bubbles in the Tan San as it was poured into the glasses made him thirsty again. The men who were taking the muchacho up on his offer of "*wheeskey-soda*" made finger-prints of melting frostiness on the outsides of their glasses. Cool looking! He noticed with annoyance that Charlotte was holding on to his arm. Charlotte was saying, "Now, Tom—" and that decided him. He took the glass that the Old Man reluctantly held out to him. The Old Man said in an undertone, and kindly:

"Too young for this sort of thing, my boy!"

Vernay looked around the room. He was letting the stinging drink flow down his throat. It cooled and warmed at the same time. Great idea, "*wheeskey-soda*"! Set you up after a long dinner—made you forget various annoyances, various grievances. Made you like everyone in the room. Made you love your profession. Made you know how good a sort the Old Man was—an Old Man who gave a dinner starting out with cocktails, running through vino tinto to champagne, to that sticky sweet stuff in the little thimbles, to

this touch of a cool Heaven in frosted glasses that were tall enough to really hold something. . . . Simms was joyfully sticking his snub nose into his own share of the pale liquid, tilting the glass so that the last drop could run into his mouth which was like a girl's mouth. That mouth had got him his cadet nickname of "Sister." Good fellow—"Sister"! Vernay tilted his own glass for a moment, brought it down to a decorous angle and held it in the salute to Simms, who returned the compliment.

"How!" they said to each other.

They drank the army toast.

Later, they said to each other:

"I feel rather bad. It's hot in here."

Simms said:

"Wish that old bonehead Upham 'u'd go, so we could get away. Fool idea, that—that you can't break away before the ranking codger makes the move! *Caramba!* S'pose he don't get sleepy as soon as we do?"

"Sure!" said Vernay. He began to feel that the youngsters did have hard luck. Nobody thought of them, or their feelings, unless they wanted to say the sort of thing that Mrs. Robins was at this minute saying to the Old Man. She was staring at the two of them, and snorting—with that snort which was so surprising in a thin woman——

"I don't approve of serving drinks to boys!"

The Old Man said, in a growl at her:

"They gotter learn to stand on their own feet. . . . And is this a children's party, anyway?"

But the "*wheeskey-soda*," chasing through Vernay's veins,

set up by its pleasing warmth a sort of pity in his heart for Mrs. Robins. Poor thing, she was only a woman! Women were so made that they nagged at men; maybe they could not help it. He hooked his arm in Simms's arm and said affectionately:

"I'm not really sleepy. What I'd like to do is to see something of you, Sister! Awful thing—to be so far away from the dear old Point and not see much of each other!"

Simms closed an eye and stared at Vernay from the one eye remaining for use. He said with importance:

"I been out here a year. Spuds, you don't know a thing 'bout li'l ole Manila—not a thing! Come along, Spuds, an' I'll show you what you been missin'! You an' me—we'll 'go *Down the Line*,' Spuds!"

But first they had to speak to Mrs. Robins and the Old Man; so they unlinked arms and shook the limp hand of the lady and met her cold eyes.

"Humph!" was what she said to their thanks for a pleasant evening.

They felt the cold eyes following them from the room. The fiery eyes of the ranking bonehead ushered them into the street. They laughed mysteriously to each other, and again linked arms. The banquetta was too narrow for them to go two abreast, and they tried it with one in the gutter, and that did not work as the gutter was a foot below the level of the banquetta. They took to the middle of the road. Simms lifted up his raucous baritone:

"Take me back to San Roqué,
Where the young lieutenants play—"

he sang to the tune of Mandalay. His girl-mouth stretched around the words.

"That's where we're goin'," he interpolated. "San Roqué. Show you the town, Spuds, ole fellow—

"Where there ain't no Ten Commandments,
An' a man can raise a thirst!"

Commandments were made for cadets. They were now full-fledged shavetails, unmarried and with the world before them for as much of it as they could buy with one hundred and sixteen dollars a month. This Simms explained to Vernay, and Vernay endorsed. He remembered something—something important—that should be talked out with Simms.

"Sister," he started, "we oughter conform, huh? How about it? That the way you get on so well?"

"Betcher!" said Simms.

"We gotter get in line, huh, Sister?"

"Betcher, Spuds!" agreed Simms. "Tha's reason I'm takin' you '*Down the Line*.'" Once more he lifted his voice and bayed the moon, that stared, and turned pale.

"Take me back to San Roqué—"

The gardens on each side of the street smelt of honey, for the *Dama de la Noche* had been open these many hours. Vernay said, sentimentally:

"Smells sweet."

"Yep," replied Simms, in the pauses of his song. "Whole blame town smells sweet. Tha's reason Mayor Crane calls where we're goin' '*Gardenia*.' Ain't that funny? Here: we

better catch a *carromata*. Got to go 'way beyond San Miguel." He whistled shrilly.

"Mayor Crane?" questioned Vernay, hazy over this. "I didn't know——"

They rattled along in the two-wheeled *carromata* which bounced at the end of its rope harness. The *cochero* sat inside with them and drove from a sideways slant. But the *cochero* did not seem to mind the noise of Simms's singing, which continued, and broke off so that he might explain to Vernay how the *carromata* set them back forty centavos as against the eighty that it would have cost them to be swell in a calesa. Simms's song came forth staccato; his reply to Vernay's repeated question came staccato, a jumpy recitative in time to the jolts of the springless *carromata*.

"He's just—called—Mayor—for—fun—he helped—out—someway—orrother—in the—Days—of—the Empire—good—ole—scout—call you—by your—first name—first time—y'know—that kind—he took—me Down—the Line—good ole—scout——"

Cooling air blew through the *carromata*. Vernay had got over wanting to go to San Roqué. He could not understand how he had ever wanted to go to San Roqué. He would tell Simms that he did not wish to go to San Roqué. . . . But Simms would jeer, and would ask him if he were still a Second Classman. . . . They were rattling past the Malacañan. Peaceful, dignified, sleeping between its great trees and the Pasig. . . . New flimsy houses came on; houses that looked, in the glare of their lamps, to be old and wise and jeering more subtly than Simms would jeer if he said

he wanted to turn back. Simms was shouting to the cochero who grinned:

"Take me back to San Roqué—heh, old timer? We'll look in on the worn-out West Coasters. *Sabe?*"

"Si!" said the old timer, spitting through his toothless gums. "*Vaarginia!*"

"Look here——" Vernay began to say.

"'S all right," Simms reassured him. "The medicos say 's all right."

"But I don't want to go!" Vernay persisted.

"No more do I," Simms surprisingly acknowledged. "But you gotter see Manila. Why—Spuds—I'd feel ashamed of myself if I didn't show you Manila, when we were at the Point together!" Simms sounded as if he might weep.

But the cochero, who had pulled up before one of the flimsy houses, was displaying temper over the forty centavos and a tip that Simms had handed out; and the indignation that then seized upon the man who knew Manila was edifying to see. Simms twisted his tiny moustache.

"Why——" he gasped—"you lousy son-of-a-sea-cook! 'Course I know you get more than that—lots more than that—when you pick up fares for this destination! But you didn't pick *us* up; see? Get that? *Siggy!*"

He swaggered into the sad new house, followed by Vernay who could not swagger. "Never let 'em do you, Spuds. It's an old trick of theirs. And *we* came of our own accord," he added proudly.

They sat in a dismal "parlor," confronted by a stout dressed-up woman who was not dismal. She smiled all over;

with her face, with her elaborate hair, with her hands which felt out toward them and emphasized her "dearies."

"Oh! Dearie," she said fatly, "I'm so glad to see American boys when they come to Manila! I do love my own people! I'd just die if I had my job in the Jap Section, or in the Filipina Section! I sure do love my country!"

"I've seen you before—somewhere—" muttered Vernay, who felt abominable.

The stout woman smiled all over her vast, heavily powdered face. "Have you, now? Well, ain't that funny, that you should see me driving in my *calesa*! I've got the first rubber-tired *calesa* in Manila, dearie," she bragged.

Simms was making motions to Vernay, and Vernay did not understand what he wanted, and stared at him; so Simms made a cup of his hand and whispered:

"How much money you got?"

It was pay day, and Vernay had in his pockets more than usual.

"We gotter set her up to champagne," Simms continued to fog-horn. "It's the *costumbre*," he explained.

The champagne, of which they set her up to several bottles, went to Vernay's head and made him feel less mournful. He began to see that the stout woman had a kind face. He thought that the broken-down West Coasters who drifted in and out of the room had kind faces. He was sorry for them all. Poor girls—so far from home! Maybe they too, like the stout woman, loved their country.

They took one of the carromatas which hovered in the newly laid out streets of San Roqué and drove silently back

to the Walled City. The dawn was beginning to show false in the East behind them as they jogged along; and Vernay was glad it was not in their faces, glad when the darkness fell again. The real dawn caught them as they passed the Malacañan, and showed them to each other. Ashamed. They looked out of either side of the carromata and spoke at once—drilled speaking.

“Hell!”

They were sick, and the cochero grinned at them. Vernay was thankful that this cochero had teeth. He could not have borne the sight of the blue gums of the native who had driven them to San Roqué.

It was not until several days after that they told each other what had happened. They were hard up, as they had spent so large a slice of their monthly pay at the house in San Roqué; and this evening they sat around the patio of the Club and did not dare order. The tall tree was decked with its lanterns, and things were peaceful and pretty, and they had had no drinks. Vernay turned to Simms with sudden resolution:

“I—changed my mind—that night,” he spit out. He drew a deep breath. He was rather ashamed to look at Simms.

Simms did not look at him. Simms said, to the view in front:

“So’d I.”

They rolled cigarettes from pocket sacks of Bull Durham. Bull Durham was cheap, at the Commissary.

“I guess it was because we were getting sick,” said Simms, apologetically.

"Sure," said Vernay. But he knew that it had really been because the idea had made him sick.

He had found out the name of that song with the falling cadence which always gave him a lump in the throat. It was "La Golondrina." About a swallow, he had made out. Swallows stayed up in the sky where things were clean. The song had got inextricably tangled in his mind with the night at San Roqué when he had found out another thing: that he did not seem to be successful at conforming. He had got sorry for his broken-down West Coaster; she had cried—difficult tears, that had swelled her nose and had washed off her make-up. She had said she never meant to do such things; she had meant to be good. Vernay had felt like crying too. But that might have been the champagne; he was too old to cry, of course. He was a man. He glanced hastily at Simms and wondered if Simms, too, had felt like crying that night at San Roqué. Probably Simms, too, was as mixed in his ideas as he, Vernay, had been ever since he had come to Manila. He felt very young, and very ignorant, and quite sure that something, somewhere, was very, very wrong. Americans were out of place in the Islands—that must be it. That must be the reason why they did things, out here, which were not beautiful things. Because, in the Islands, men could live beautifully if they would.

He had thought, the night when he had "gone Down the Line," that in going he had been conforming to what all other Americans were doing. He might be mistaken; but how was he to find out? He felt bewildered, and watched the

other men around the Club for clues. They quarrelled with fate, but on the whole seemed content with what they had found to do in the Islands. But he had brought out, enshrined, his ideal of West Point, and the lid of the casket had been pried off. He was shocked by his new suspicion that West Point was in error as to its policy of incarcerating the youthful cadet until what time he is turned over to the government, which carries on the idea of an armed and trained non-thinking machine.

He had tried to talk to his captain. He had tried to put into words what he had not yet got straight in his mind.

"What is *right*?" he had asked Captain Jennings.

Captain Jennings had been in a hurry to get back to the morning drill, which had been halted for a short space of gasping. He had been in the act of putting the whistle to his lips, and he had stopped the whistle in midair to blast Vernay.

"It don't matter to us what's right and what's wrong about our being out here," he had growled. "We're out here, aren't we? We were *sent* out here, weren't we? It isn't up to us to think it out."

Vernay wondered if they would leave a scratch on the surface of Manila. Beauty was in the patio; but the Americans had not put it there. Beauty was throughout the Club, but the Spaniards had built it. The Americans were, in fact, busily destroying what beauty they had found. They were blowing apertures in the Wall, they were planning to drain the Moat. All of this was up-to-date hygiene, and probably excusable for that reason. But they said that when

they had sucked up sufficient silt from the harbour to dump into the drained Moat it would make a splendid baseball field; and that was sacrilege. The Americans called the sleeping quarters of the Club "Drunkards' Row"; and that was winking a ribald eye. He looked over to where Simms sprawled in a wicker chair.

"I'd hate to live anywhere outside the Intramuros," he began.

Simms dropped back to the attitude of a First Classman toward a Second Classman. "Come off your perch!" he admonished. "*We* don't call it the Intramuros. The Walled City is good enough for a good American. What you givin' us, anyway, Spuds? You aren't a Don."

Vernay leaned back in his own chair and gave way to the dissatisfaction which had started when he landed, and had rooted, and at San Roqué had sprung up into a virulent growth. It was hot to-night. The groups of officers who usually hung around the Club had scattered to the Luneta, hunting for the change in the breeze when the day died. Flies were over everything—droning, courting, getting married—the houseflies that China Boy Number One assured him had followed the Americans to the Philippines. Vernay's dissatisfaction carried him a step further than the impassive viewpoint of Number One Boy, and led him into looking upon the Americans themselves as flies which were sticking over everything. Certainly they were sticking persistently as well as all-pervadingly; roaming over Manila, he told himself, smiling or raging at its discomforts as they happened to be men or women, grumbling, cursing exile, and

going home at the end of tours of "foreign" service with as little that was new in their heads as they had brought out. One vast group of party-giving, excited aliens who discussed "the situation." They gave Vernay a sense of hurry, of being rushed to a stand on points about which he had had no time as yet to form his own impressions. This sense which he carried away from every "party," of being pushed and pulled against his will, had at last reduced him to a state in which he had no longer even a clear impression of himself. But he must strengthen himself against this sense of being forced into some decision which his own heart could not accept. The impression that he had brought from the Colonel's dinner—that the effort of all whites out here should be to go on as they went at home—he decided was what had landed him at San Roqué. He had reasoned badly; but who would help him to reason well? . . . It was hot in the patio. He slid further down in his wicker chair. A Bilibid chair it was, made by native prisoners to whom the government was teaching trades. That was all right. He approved of that. It was according to prison reform at home. But not until Mrs. Jennings had answered the magnificent woman had he fully realized that what he himself was hunting in Manila was some glamour which was not like home. "Home" cooked up schemes such as those bedraggled American women in San Roqué. The Spaniards had not run amok on schemes like that, he told himself. It surely could not be necessary to choose between worn-out West Coasters and going native? All around him were signs of a civilization which was older than the civilization in America—a

civilization that had not gone native by having accommodated itself to the climate.

He said aloud:

"Mrs. Jennings was right about not going native; but what's worse than that——"

"Shucks!" Simms interrupted. "Don't go by Mrs. Jennings, if you know what's good for you! That lady'd flirt with the paper off the wall! When you see the Captain romping around barracks, tanning the hide off one of his men for getting drunk, you can bet your bottom dollar it's because the night before Mrs. Jennings went out to a booze party with a bachelor. I know! I've 'heard tell.'"

But even when expostulating with Simms about this gossip Vernay suspected that Mrs. Jennings, in her own course of conduct, was following what had been her course of conduct on army posts in the United States; that she was not coolly, logically reasoning out how to manage herself in Manila.

An older officer had come into the patio. He was sighing, and running his finger around the tight and starched collar of his white uniform.

"Whew!" he gulped. He clapped his hands together sharply. "The 'Call of the East'!" he muttered to himself. "Give me a place where you punch a button when you want a Club servant!"

But he welcomed the China boy who came in answer to his signal. The China boy slid off into the body of the Club. The man, who was tall and rangy and dressed in white that had not yet had its suggestion of weave beaten out of it by the stones of the lavenderas, looked gravely at

them, threw himself into a chair and winked at the lanterns in the tall tree.

"Young and fresh and with illusions!" he confided to the tree. "I was that way, once—before I came to the Islands the first time. But I landed yesterday, as you know, Tree—to give it another try; and it's *all* the same! You're the same, Tree; dammed if I think you've put forth another branch! Tell me this, Tree: what's a bachelor man to do out here—a fellow who's an acting bachelor because his wife won't come out with him?"

Vernay looked at Simms, and Simms looked at Vernay. This was raw talk, and the fellow ought to know that they could not help overhearing him. But for some reason or other—possibly the whisky-soda that he now drank with great gulps—the rangy man did not care who heard him.

"He's a West Pointer," whispered Vernay to Simms. "Notice his ring? We ought to do something about it. If we leave him here some chap who *isn't* a West Pointer'll hear him!"

"That's right," said Simms, in the same cautious undertone. "*Esprit de corps*, and all that. . . . But he'd slam us in the head if we stepped in; he's tight."

"It's awful!" said Vernay, as they sneaked from the patio. "His wife ought to be killed for not coming out with him! Makes you scared of American girls, doesn't it, Sister? Tell you what they are—American girls: they aren't feminine!"

"That's what drives us to San Roqué!" said Simms, awfully. "Say, Spuds, how much money you *really* got with you?"

Vernay stopped short in the corridor with Number One Boy gazing affably from his post near the street door. He felt, coming over him, the sick wave of shame that his memories had been sending as a visitation. He shook his head.

"I wouldn't go near that place again——" he began.

Simms gave the tremendous guffaw that was so tight a fit for his fresh, pink, innocent mouth.

"I just wanted a drink," he said, "and I'm broke—flat. And I thought maybe you had enough for two *little* ones. That chap in there—he sorter made me feel bad. Maybe it's homesick——"

"Oh, well——" said Vernay—"I *could* manage that, I 'spect. I've got a little saved up for emergencies. Let's have it, and I'll sign a chit for it."

They had it. Chits being easy to sign, they had another. When they finally parted at the street door, and Simms had gone off down the street, Number One Boy's smile was shot with an amusement peculiarly Chinese.

Warm satisfaction in his surroundings took possession of Vernay. Coming from the patio to sift along the vast rooms, penetrating into dark corners where it gained assurance to put forth its full strength, was creeping the divine breath of jasmines. Other smells in the corridors, not so divine. But his senses were closed to the other smells; his imagination was fixed on those mossy, warm and moist odours which he had first met in greenhouses at home. He liked this suggestion of steaming earth, because out here it was not the forced product of artificial protection but was a part of the land, of

the climate, of a zone of the earth's surface that until recently had not belonged to the Americans.

He fumbled for matches to light the candles which, stiff and unfamiliar in their high nickel holders, and shielded from the puffs of breeze by their round glass globes, were bent to an angle and hung on nails in the walls. The candles were wiltedly lop-sided in their holders. As the lights went down low, and then, gaining courage when they found themselves protected, went up and licked the sides of the globes and turned them sooty and burst through the soot and faintly illuminated the large room, his heart was light. He slid his feet over the petate which partly covered the highly polished mahogany floor; the woven grass mat was as slippery as the hand-hewn planks, and coasted recklessly, a little tropic island occupied by a castaway who did not want to get off and go home. In this room his clothes dangled from wooden pegs driven in the wooden walls; dust flew over them through the always open window which was protected from nothing but bodily intrusion. Tagalog children pushed their faces between the ironwork of its bulging reja and watched him dress; watched him undress; watched him fall asleep—if they were abroad at a late enough hour.

For all he knew or cared, while he slept he was watched by other eyes through the lattice frieze which ran, starkly white, at the top of the painted bright blue walls. There was often a scuttling behind that lattice when the surprising sunlight had in the wink of an eye disappeared from the streets of the Intramuros. Vernay liked to imagine that the scut-

tling was the woollen rustle of some monk whose ghost represented the turning over of this ancient building to the Americans. It never started up until the last rays of the sun, abandoning the narrow streets between their solid blocks of houses, was busy gilding the square towers of the church down the Street of the Palace. He liked to think that the spying monk behind the lattice was the ghost of the old artisan who had painted on the ceiling of the room its decoration of stars arranged in constellations. Stars of yellow paint they were, and of five points so emphasized that the eye was forced to keep counting them. There would have been something inconceivably depressing in the fact that the yellow stars did not twinkle, if he had not been hopeful of the presence of the monk behind the lattice.

Confound Number Two Boy, who was clop-clopping into the room with an announcement:

“*Baño!*”

These China boys announced baths at the most extraordinary hours. Who wanted to take a bath at midnight—even in a gorgeous marble tub sunk in the floor and which had to be slid into with courage, abandon, and teeth together for the shock of cold water that proved in every case to be milk-warm? He opened his mouth to yell at Number Two Boy, and was met by a smile that stretched the yellow lips but cracked no line of the palely yellow face.

“*Baño* velly good for *caliente cabeza*,” remarked the imperturbable attendant.

The Spaniards had built the bathrooms of this old house; they were unlike shower baths installed by the Americans.

No sense of beauty the Americans had—he told himself. Why—they had hung up Standard Oil cans with holes punched in their bottoms; and had then punched holes in the floors underneath the suspended cans; and you stood over the holes in the floor and under the holes in the can, and cursed your “boy” for not having put enough water in the can, and let the soapy stuff run down into the street. Right across the banquetta it always trickled. No beauty!

His yell, when it finally came, was:

“I’ll take that *baño*!”

Number Two Boy made obeisance.

“What’s that noise top-side?”

Number Two Boy, slipping toward the door, paused and looked ruminatingly at the lattice.

“*Fraile*?” Vernay pushed him.

Number Two Boy closed his eyes with indifference.

“Lats,” he said.

“Rats? Oh, hell! Here, now, you slant-eyed imbecile, do a little better than that!”

“*Gheko*,” said the China boy obligingly.

“Lizard barking like a dog? That’s likely! Try again. It’s a signal of some sort. Velly old city, as you would say.”

“*Tluly gheko*,” the China boy insisted, warming to a point that had failed at first to interest him. “Velly old house.”

Oh, well, that was all right. There were no barking lizards at home.

III

WHAT was it that Manila tried to tell him? Sometimes, when he passed a gloomy house and a woman was playing on one of the pianos which, lined with tin against moisture as they were, still spoke with plaintive voices—and the woman played things the names of which he did not know, and did not need to know because of the agony in the notes of those running waltzes—the eyes of his soul almost opened. He felt the effort of that opening, the struggle that his soul was making to see it all. Not the insidious whispers from flowers that he had not seen; those flowers were not what the eyes of his soul were seeing while the waltzes ran over his nerves. Not the gorgeousness of colour that he could see—the purple of Bougainvillea against red-tiled roofs; the scarlet of Poinsettia craning over mildewed walls; Esmeralda flaunting blossoms that were white in the mornings, rose colour at midday, and by night blushing at what it knew with a dull and ominous purple—not this. Not this alone. Underneath the beauty which the eye could see was a greater something. These beauties upon which his eyes feasted reached a man's unaroused and trembling heart. What was it that could reach deeper?

The fact that he did not understand tormenting him by night, took its place in the daytime of work as a vague yearning of which he was ashamed. For in the mornings he drilled with his company; and who had aspirations when

double-timing to get his line whirled on a pivot, bawling the Captain's commands back to his platoon, working as he had worked at West Point, with the difference that now he was working on thirty stupidities who did the best they could and got more stupid with every effort? The glare of the sun, reflected from the walls of the Cuartel, left no shadows on the Parade except the round little splotch that moved with each man, wiggling on the ground as he shifted his rifle, wavering as he right-about-faced, straightening out and dogging at his heels as he fell into line again. The sun heated the trodden dirt until feet burned through heavy shoes; beat down on campaign hats and ate through the orange-silk linings into the brain; bit through tan flannel shirts to the red cotton-crepe underwear that the Quartermaster recommended against this very thing, and chewed through that to the skin itself; pierced the skin and ate up the bones of the body. Heat! Sunshine! No shade! Vernay, everlastingly double-timing, everlastingly shouting to men who blinked through veils of perspiration, was too dulled to wonder. In a treadmill of stepping on matter that burned, breathing in matter that scorched, looking into matter that seared, no thought was possible—only sensations.

Captain Jennings, leaning against the wall, mopping his streaming brow before the perspiration should roll down into his eyes—"Because it smarts, the damned sweat, more than it does back home"—harangued Vernay and the First Lieutenant.

"The Dons were cusséd lazy; catch them doing real work like we're doing. Look at 'em, loafing in the *fondas* and

pouring wine down their throats from the spouts of carafes because they're too lazy to pour it into a glass first—that's the key-note. Cusséd lazy! They've been lazy for too long to take count of. They *never* took the trouble to pour that wine in glasses! Proof of which is that that squirt of it never runs in their eyes or their noses by accident. Take it from me, they've always taken the short cut. Always the easiest way, with the Dons."

The First Lieutenant mopped his brow, propped himself against the wall, made his short body as nearly like the lanky company commander as possible. "You're right, Capt'n," he said. "My! I hadn't thought of all that!"

"Take this parade ground, f'instance," continued Captain Jennings in a gratified voice; "who but the laziest people in the world would have built it so small? By just exerting themselves the least little bit they could have run that wall out some more and given us room to turn around in. God! It's a good thing we took these Islands—good for the Islands, I mean. For we don't want 'em! Whew!" He stopped to mop his cheeks in time to prevent the perspiration from getting into the hollows that two tours in the climate had carven from his nose to his mouth. "But we got to civilize 'em, now we've got 'em. Paid good money for 'em; and I will say the Dons took it gladly."

"But—" Vernay spoke up—"they held on, out here; and that wasn't the easiest way."

The two older officers stared at him. "Held on?" they said together. "They didn't! They took our twenty million bucks in a hurry."

Vernay knew, himself, what he had meant, but he was not sure that he could explain. "That statue—" he felt his way—"Legaspi and Urdaneta—they landed together, just the way they are in that statue, shoulder to shoulder, comrades, holding up the sword and cross. I—I must say, it impressed me. To snatch these Islands—and to hold on . . ." Under the open amazement of his own comrades, he felt himself blushing. But having tried to put his feelings into words had helped him to get the idea of something which had tormented him. He knew that he was nearer to hearing the secret message of Manila. For the first time, in the sunlight, he was straining his ears. But not to hear what his comrades might be saying.

For, "We'll show the Dons how colonies ought to be run," Captain Jennings was finishing, as he blew his whistle for the men to fall in.

Marching and countermarching over the red-hot earth of the parade ground; bawling again to stupid men from a brain that was turning as stupid as they; closing up; extending. Hours of it! What use was it? Possibly it was a good thing that he had his work to pull him, during the day, from fancies. But he had thought that his work would be a young man's work; he had thought that he would be fighting, getting wounded, shedding his own blood and the blood of other men. Young man's work; young body's work. He had thought that he would love it. He did not love this thud of heavy feet on red-hot earth. He did not love this smell of perspiration soaking through khaki breeches and flannel shirts.

"Dismissed!"

More thuds—broken thuds—as the men fell out. Vernay heard his own thud-thud-thud as he walked wearily toward the pleasant shade of a deep doorway.

"Oh—Mr. Vernay!"

Vernay braced his shoulders which had blistered in the sun and thudded back to Captain Jennings. He walked through a wriggling mass of wormy heat waves that had rushed into the vacuum left by the heated men when they piled into barracks.

"Like you to go over to Headquarters with a message."

A salute that left his head swimming from its snappy movement—that left him glad his two feet were braced together for a support. Captain Jennings was looking more closely at him.

"You don't look just right, youngster; peaked. Don't let the heat get you." And then, as Vernay turned away with the long official envelope—"Don't get morbid, either. It don't pay. What you said, just now . . . If you'll take the advice of a man who's been out here before—in 'the Days of the Empire,' when we had a chance to run the game—don't think too much. That's what I meant by being morbid. You'll get morbid, sure fire, if you think too much out here. It's a long way from home, you know. Skate along on the surface of things; that way you'll get home as good as you came out." He pulled at his long moustache. He added, thoughtfully—"At least, you'll get home in as good shape as any of us get home."

Vernay had been, in his imagination, at the cool bottom

of that sunken tub at the Club—coolish water all over him, the air cool in the bathroom which was hidden away from the prying rays of even the snooping rising or setting sun—and he had to close his eyes to this and hurry across the Intramuros. The sun was now, at midday, bold enough to pour its most evil rays into the narrow streets, sweeping both banquettas at once, routing shadows that might have been lurking for centuries in the queerly angled corners. To-day, like all days, was heat—and sun—and more heat—and more sun. At midday, Vernay knew, nobody with brains in the head should expose that head to the wicked rays of the sun. Only Americans did it. But then, Americans did all things that the zone forbade—the Americans who could do anything and get away with it. Cocky—that was what the Americans were out here; campaign hats cocked at such a risky angle that it was a wonder they stayed on and no wonder the sun found a way to get in under them. Those hats, at that angle—Vernay thought they were symbolical. Light-tan felt Stetsons for the officers, and light-tan felt Q. M.'s for the enlisted men. But all cocked at the same angle, and from underneath all of those fawn-coloured brims—whether above the brim was a red, a blue, or a yellow cord, or the black-and-gold cord of an officer—laughing, jeering eyes which refused to be serious in face of this joke that their country had pulled from fate's grab-bag.

Vernay, underneath the inadequate protection of his own Stetson, began to notice that the buildings were dancing in the heat—a macabre dance. It was near the end of the month and his funds were low; he could not consider the en-

ticements of occasional calesas which passed him. If there had been any shade—on either side of the street—But there was no shade. He began to brood over the delights of shade. It would be lovely to be in the shade—heavenly to be out of the sun! He began to look at street signs, on the blazing corners as he passed them. Here was the typhoon signal-post; he was almost there. One more effort to keep his feet in a straight line, one more effort to keep his face straight ahead, and he would be at the vast hot Plaza Moriones where calesas and Dougherty Wagons waited for the officers whose work kept them in Fort Santiago. Lucky, those staff officers! For the interior of Fort Santiago was cool as an ice house. The sun had never seen what went on inside those thick walls of stone, any more than it had seen what went on in the stone chambers underneath the Moat—the torture chambers where at least the tortured had been beautifully cool. It ran through Vernay's head that the old race who had built this city had known how to keep things cool. Secret, too; but above all, cool! And beautiful because beautifully cool.

He stopped walking. He was in front of the carved lintel of the gateway to Fort Santiago. The stonework, greenly mossy from the moisture of the Pasig, was pleasing to his scorched eyes, which he allowed to rest on it. Manila's coat-of-arms looked calmly, immovably down on him: "*La muy noble y siempre leal Ciudad.*" He put his hand up to his hat brim; he did not clearly know whether he was saluting the always loyal city, or whether he wished to cover his eyes for shame at the West Point engineers who had come out to blow

up old stones which could not flinch as they gave way to the modern idea of fresh air in the Walled City. The conquering Americans, destroying, and substituting things and customs that were neither beautiful nor time-honoured. Looking at the Moat and planning to efficiently drain it. Squinting at the gates above which the rusted portcullises hung suspended on chains that would not now creak around their windlasses, and arranging to blow out larger openings in order to let fresh and wholesome air into crooked streets through which had run at many times the black dog that brought the cholera. Vernay put his hand to his head again; and this time he knew that it was to wipe from his brow the moisture of weakness. He did not know why he should feel so weak, nor why the Plaza should run around him at such a furious pace; he could understand only that Manila, a lady, was being insulted. Manila was feminine, was terrible because she was feminine; and they had better look out! For she was capable of changing her mood with her garments. She could smile in the sunlight and love in the moonlight; and all the time she wore a knife in her stocking. And all the time, whether she smiled and loved, or scowled and killed, the tinkle of guitars went on behind closed doors of old houses; the drinking of vino tinto went on in bodegas which never closed their own doors; and this conflict of American science and hygiene and improvement with the Middle Ages went remorselessly forward.

He did not know why he was seeing so plainly to-day. Again he put his hand to his head.

"Hello!" said a loud voice.

He turned with difficulty—slowly, holding to the wall of the gateway.

“Brass buttons to the front!” said Saulsbury jovially.

Saulsbury’s manner was condescending; it had been condescending, Vernay remembered dully, ever since their arrival in the Islands; the manner of a civilian with business sense to an officer who presumably had none. Saulsbury talked—and talked—droning talk, like a beehive in the heat. He removed his pith helmet and took a long time mopping his beaded brow; he mopped it ostentatiously with a very large silk handkerchief. Vernay remembered that Saulsbury always did this, and did it as if it were a rite instead of a matter of comfort. “Warm little neck of the woods,” the cement agent continued sociably; and Vernay remembered that Saulsbury had never failed to make this remark upon the completion of the rite of removing the pith helmet.

“Been wringing a contract from your Q. M. Dept.,” Saulsbury bragged. “It takes these birds a long time to see big business.”

This was all that Vernay could remember just now. . . . He found the idea in the back of his head—somewhere—that it was queer he could not remember why he had come to the old gateway with the coat-of-arms on it; but it did not really matter, if he could hold his legs under him where they belonged. He tried to listen to what Saulsbury was saying; he might as well listen if he could not remember what his own business was. He had been talking too, but he did not remember what he had said.

“Say, Vernay,” he heard Saulsbury say, “did it ever occur

to you that you might be a round peg in a square hole?"

And that was a funny thing to say! Vernay heard himself laughing . . . felt himself spinning around against the wall on which he leaned . . . did not understand why Saulsbury put forth such a sudden rough hand to clutch him.

It was nice to be sick in a cool room at the Army Hospital,—sick enough to have a nurse rowing over one. Just to lie quietly here, and be waited upon, and get over the sun-stroke. Plenty of ice allowed him—more ice than he had seen at any one time since he had left the Transport. Ice for caps on his head, and from which he would try to steal a piece to put in his mouth; and the nurse would see him, and bring him a saucer of crushed ice. Ice all around him! They did not limit the Hospital to twenty-five pounds a day, he complacently reflected. He lay in a high-ceiled room opening on the cool corridor which ran around the patio; and at the other end of the little cell-like room he could look through the vast window into a garden which cut the Hospital off from the noises of the street. He would beg the nurse to push back the screen that shut the corridor from his sight, and let him watch the doctors and nurses tramping by. The doctors and nurses were walking, and working, and getting tired. It made him feel good to lie on his back in his cool bed, with a piece of ice melting under his tongue, and watch people who had to walk and get hot. He felt so well, from this, that he would have suspected himself of malingering if his fever had not kept up. It came back every day—scorching as ever, and making his head ache as

badly as it had ached when he had fallen down in the Plaza Moriones. Then the nurse would sit beside his narrow iron bed with the Q. M. insignia pressed into its headpiece, and put her hand on his forehead and tell him to stop rolling from side to side. She had such a cool, firm hand—the only firm thing in his world of drifting fantasies—that one day, when she took it away, he reached out for it and made love to her. She did not laugh, as Charlotte laughed; and she did not cry, as a girl ought to; she simply put her hand back on his forehead and told him to try and go to sleep and he would feel better when he waked up.

But he did not feel better when he waked up; for that was the afternoon when Simms was allowed to come in and see him. And Simms, promptly and with whoops of delight, told him that his own regiment had been ordered down to Calbayog, in Samar, where there was fighting with the Pulajanes. Vernay sat up in bed.

“Any chance of *our* going?” he asked eagerly.

Simms shook his head. “Not the ghost of a chance!” he told him. “You are to stay here, and we are to go South. For a few days it looked squally for us; but our Old Man settled it by going to Headquarters and talking louder than your Old Man. Sorry for you, Spuds. But the talk is that your Old Man’s lady put a spoke in his wheel.”

Vernay threw himself back on the bed. He turned his face away from Simms. He hated Simms at that moment. Simms had all the luck! Why—fighting was what he had thought he was coming out to!

After Simms had left—hurrying to the Escolta, he said, to

buy things he might need "down there"—Vernay's doctor entered.

"Got to turn you over to someone else, old man!" he began cheerily. "I'm ordered down to the Visayas. They expect a good deal of fighting in Samar. I just dropped in to say good-bye; got to hurry along to the Escolta to buy some things I may need down there." He held out his hand.

Vernay could not see to hold out his own hand. He blinked once or twice. He hoped this cheery medico had not noticed that he had been acting like a girl—like a baby. That nurse might understand, but a man would not.

"Look here, Medico!" he started. "If I can get transferred to that regiment that's under orders—will you pass me?"

The doctor shook his head. "Not a chance in the world," he said positively. "What you've got to do is to stay quietly in Manila and get patched up. You wouldn't last a week, in the *bosque*, with that fever. Well, good-bye, old man. Miss Crawford will take care of you all right; and the other doctors here are better than I am, anyway. I'm just one of these rough specimens who get on better away from cities." He went out laughing.

Not a chance. . . .

But the doctor had been right. When Vernay was allowed to try it out in the sun, he was glad enough to get back in his cool bed with the sheets drawn taut and folded at the corners like an envelope; he was glad to have Miss Crawford slip into his mouth little pieces of ice from a tea-spoon.

"What on earth have I *had*?" he asked Miss Crawford, after one of his hasty returns from the sunlit patio.

"Fever," she said briefly. "Now you lie quietly, *won't* you, while I run down the corridor a minute?"

"But what kind of fever?" he persisted, holding to a corner of her apron so that she might not get away until she had answered him. "He could have let me go—that medico . . ."

"No: he couldn't," she said, as positively as the doctor had spoken when he had asked about being passed for field duty.

He thought about it until she had returned from down the corridor, had stuck a thermometer in his mouth, had taken it out and consulted it with secretive guile, and had picked up the bowl of now melted ice. The water which had been ice slopped over the edge of the bowl and fell on her starched white apron.

"Was it the *calentura perniciosa*?" he resumed, hopefully. It would have been bad, he thought, to have been kept from transferring on account of a mere sunstroke.

Miss Crawford laughed. "Lord, no! You wouldn't be here now if it had! Just dengue; but it was complicated by your sunstroke."

Just dengue! Just dengue had kept him from his chance! The words rankled, so that he began to dislike Miss Crawford who had used them. Plenty of time in the hospital; few books to be got, mails only occasional, and the only exciting newspapers those printed in Spanish. He studied his Spanish harder than he had studied it on the passage out. He

sat in the patio, painstakingly reading *El Diario de Manila*, to which his fancy had shifted after a few trials of the native newspaper, *El Renacimiento*. The fiery eloquence of *El Renacimiento* seemed to him schoolboyish, but without the schoolboy humour. Always eloquent, and always fiery, whether reporting plain daily news of the world or the latest American plan for stamping out cholera, or the native martyrdoms at the hands of the *frailes*—which were certainly old stuff now, and in a newspaper at home would not have been allowed to take up space. It reminded him of the times in high school when he and his fellow men-in-embryo had yelled debates on George Washington and the Revolution as if it had been the burning question of the day. Amusing—*El Renacimiento!* Howled over a carabao getting mired in its mud wallow, he told himself. But it got his mind back to the *frailes* and he began to read the Spanish Church paper, the *Libertas*. The Old Man could not disapprove of this; it was not discussing the religious question and it was working up his Spanish. But it got him more than ever confused as to what was right and what was wrong out here. In spite of the Old Man's prohibition he talked it over. The man with whom he talked it over was young, and American, and a missionary who had broken down in health and had been taken into this sole American hospital in the city.

The young man said:

"There were abuses on the part of the *frailes*. You'll find abuses in every machine in power, anywhere in the world, won't you? I think so . . . I only hope that *we* won't get

heady and make fools of ourselves! So far—" he laughed like any youngster whose collar is fastened in front—"we are having too up-hill a road to travel!"

"At any rate"—the missionary said, on another day when they sat in the patio with the newspapers spread out before them—"the Islands are Christian. The *frailes* did that."

But the *frailes* had done that by fighting with the troops, Vernay jogged his memory.

True: but the young missionary was glad that that day had gone by. He did not believe in Christianizing people by the sword. It did not seem suitable, somehow; did it?

"Urdaneta—" Vernay began. But what was the use? Urdaneta had landed with the cross in his hand and a sword strapped to his thigh; he had been in the thick of the fighting. He had not been stuck in hospital with "just dengue." Vernay decided that never before had a man been stuck in hospital with "just" a foolish fever when fighting was in the wind. He felt that there had been a mistake somewhere along the line. He felt as if he were blindfolded and turning a corner into a street that his feet did not know. Tottering. He could not make up his mind because he could not see.

He knew that he would look back upon that sojourn in the hospital as a real turning of a real corner, although he could not reason out why he should see that it was a corner. . . . He did not see clearly until the day when he read, on the "flimsy," the report of Simms's death in Samar—shot in the first scrap with the Pulajanés. The "flimsy," once a week carboned on tissue-paper and broadcasted over the garrisons of the Islands, was Simms's obituary. Vernay was standing

in front of the bulletin board of the Hospital when his eye was caught by that name which was too full of *s-s*. . . . Vernay turned his corner. He was out of it—that was what he was. The street into which he turned was dark, and he might lose his way.

IV

THE thing that worried him was the recollection of what he had said to Charlotte at the Colonel's dinner. The clearest part of the memory was that she had brightly put him off the track. He had been wondering ever since if education did this for young women—that men would fail to make the nerves of their bodies quiver because those nerves had been disciplined out of the possibility of an unpremeditated jump. He had not been able during the time which had elapsed since the dinner to believe, from anything the girl dropped, that she remembered what he had said; and he had not been convinced that she had forgotten.

He looked at her as she sat across the little marble-top table at Clarke's "ice-cream parlour." The afternoon was so devastatingly warm that the pink ice cream was proving an alien origin by promptly resolving into its original elements after one look around the assorted potential eaters. Charlotte was undisturbed.

"I don't mind," she said with a ready philosophy. "The pink soup it turns into is quite cold. Besides, when a plate of ice cream first gets to you there are thumb marks on the mound they shape it into—haven't you noticed? I like it better this way." And then she looked sorry that she had said a harsh thing about natives.

It was so very warm, in this glass-enclosed shop on the

warmest corner of the Escolta, that the waiter judged it a propitious moment for calling their attention to the electric fans with which the punkahs had been replaced.

"Oh, yees, saar," stated the modest Filipino, "we aare all-same *Americano!*"

The waiter had been carrying plates of ice cream between every pair of his fingers. He was bustling, with the most ostentatious hurry and rush, and stopping at every table on his line of march so that his swiftness and willingness might be admired. He came back up the room with one plate left in his hand. The mound on the plate was dejected and hung its head in shame at the brown fingers which had several times dipped into it. He stopped between Charlotte and Vernay as they sat regarding what he had served to them. He wished to see if they had fully appreciated him. The plate that he held in his hand tipped, just as its mound of ice cream wearily leaned its head over the side of the saucer. A globule fell on Vernay's white blouse, the main mass of the stuff went into Charlotte's lap—a poisonous splash of nasty colour that spread. The waiter snatched a napkin and began cleaning off the stain on Vernay's sleeve. In his excited remorse at this desecration he jabbered in his native tongue, coloured with Spanish, punctuated with English.

"The lady——" reminded Vernay. "Siggy, and get another napkin and mop up that puddle in her lap, you idiot! Vamoose!"

Charlotte exasperated him by her look of reproach. "Don't!" she said gently. "The poor little thing is scared

to death! You've frightened him so that he doesn't know what to do." She smiled at the waiter.

"What?" demanded Vernay of the waiter, who had muttered.

"Ticher no matter," remarked the waiter, continuing his ministrations on the blouse. He had turned his back squarely on Charlotte.

At the moment, this squat youth was to Vernay a wooden idol of all the iniquity, all the malignancy, all those things which were covered in his mind by the term Malay. The boy's eyes seemed turning up to a slant in the corners, an ugly mask of barbarity; his mouth to be changing from a simple arrangement of two fat lips of pale reddish purple to a suggestion of a knife wound. Vernay was sure that he could see through the ostentatiously worn American shoes to prehensile toes which clawed and grabbed.

"I told you to wipe off the lady's dress," he said quietly. "If you don't do it, *pronto*, I'll twist your yellow neck."

"Ticher no matter," the boy repeated. "Ticher iss *mujer* what iss not in the Arrmy. Ticher iss *mucho amigo* with the Filipinos." He paid not the slightest attention to the ice cream that was by now trickling from the girl's lap to the floor.

Vernay jumped to his feet and collared the waiter, pushing his head around to face toward the girl, forcing him to a position in front of the puddle of ice cream. He cursed the boy with every muscle of his powerful body as well as with his white lips. "If you don't do what I tell you, you won't

have a whole bone in your God-damned black body to get you to hell!" he finished.

The waiter, his eyes bulging with astonishment, managed to dodge under Vernay's elbow. He started running toward the sloppy counter behind which other waiters were, with spatulate thumbs, plastering down other mounds of ice cream.

"'Sús-Mari' 'oseph!" he was screaming in uncontrollable terror. "This *Teniente* has gone *loco*! It must be the heat! She iss only a ticher!"

Vernay pulled down his cuffs which had slipped back. He said to the girl:

"I beg your pardon. I know you think I'm a brute. It's just as well he ran away. I might have killed him in another minute."

"Why not?" asked the placid Captain Jennings who, from the next table, had watched with interest. "I'm sorry you didn't kill him. The only good native is a dead one—as the old Army used to say of the Indians. Here—" to his own waiter, whose movements had been immensely accelerated by the screams of the waiter who was running—"go get me another plate of this glue; it's cool, whatever else you can say about it." He shook his head at Charlotte and laughed kindly. "Look here, young lady—as I told you on the boat coming out, it's no good trying to do *them* any good. They just can't take it in—what you're up to, you pretty girls. You'll never get a thanks from 'em. See if you do."

Mrs. Jennings, seated dutifully beside her Captain, leaned

back in her chair until her craned neck had brought her head almost to Vernay's shoulder. "What a waste of time!" she smiled. "Can't you show her that it's a waste of time? . . . You haven't been to see me for a long while——" she sighed.

Vernay continued to explain to Charlotte. "I shouldn't have made such a scene, and I'm awfully contrite; really, I am! You're mad at me, aren't you?"

Charlotte lifted her eyes. "It didn't seem so brave, to me; you're so big you could have wrung his neck without danger to you."

Mrs. Jennings put in quickly: "Oh, but that's nasty of you! I can tell you this: they aren't capable of respecting anyone who *doesn't* take them by the throat!"

"That's right, old lady!" chuckled Captain Jennings, running his hand down into his pocket, meditating over the few coins that the hand brought to light, and finally settling his bill with the waiter who stood beside him on legs that shook. "Let's hustle. I want to get back to the Club so as to sit in at that game you pulled me away from for those blasted calls."

"See here——" started Vernay to Charlotte, "don't you really see why I had to go for that native?" He searched her face with troubled eyes. "He was insolent to you, in his attitude—with what he did and what he didn't do, with what he said, and with his eyes. He was—he was drawing a distinction. . . . Oh, well, if you won't see it, you won't!"

She had made a gesture of denial of what he was thinking.

"You've no business, you know, to be fooling around with the natives," he added obstinately.

Charlotte was silent.

His gaze, helplessly straying, pierced the glass of the windows to where an awning shaded the banquetta, which here widened into a pleasant sweep as it got around the corner to the Plaza Moraga. Two mournful dark eyes seemed to his inattention the largest things on the banquetta. The eyes were set in a thin white face. Absently, he stared into these eyes which stared back at him. . . . He would try again with Charlotte; and he hated the thought of how cross she would be when she did finally open her mouth to reply.

"You'd much better give it up—all this silliness—" he said, "and marry me."

"Thanks!" she took him up tartly. "I don't like your Flirtation Walk brand of love!" She tried to dry the water with which she had been removing the pink stains from her skirt. "My dress is all right now. Let's go."

She started collecting her bag, her gloves which it had been too hot to wear, her fan which she had been using spasmodically. She too looked through the window to where a thin boy had taken his stand.

"I do believe that child is trying to attract your attention," she said to Vernay.

Vernay said, indifferently: "It's the ice cream he's looking at." He was thinking how cross Charlotte was over these annoying natives. He was thinking that she had really been disgusted with him about the waiter. He was

wondering whether he was right about the waiter, and about all natives, or whether she was right. It was all going around and around in his mind.

The little boy's nose, in its youthful malleability, was spreading out of shape along the glass; his mouth made frosting as it excitedly breathed. He again caught Vernay's eye and brought his two hands together.

"If I hadn't got into the habit of putting everything down to the heat," said Vernay, amused and forgetting Charlotte's crossness, "I'd say he was applauding me. He has the grand manner; he is making me feel like an opera singer—or a bull-fighter."

Charlotte thought aloud: "You'd make a better bull-fighter."

Vernay looked at her for a moment. There was nothing to say. She sat still after her suggestion that they leave. She looked a little sorry and a little ashamed, but she did not say that she was feeling sorry and ashamed. The street door opened and the thin boy who had looked in from the banquetta walked gravely up to them. He was dressed in clothes like those of an old man, his blue denim coat and trousers hideously unsuitable. His black hair, which was like a fine quality of wire with a metallic sheen of blue, was cropped so close that it showed the formation of his compact skull. His manner was free of embarrassment and seemed to be doing them some honour.

"I admire you very much, *señor*," he began, speaking very perfect Spanish with a very perfect graciousness, "for what you did to the native."

Vernay burst out laughing, delighted at what he saw on Charlotte's face.

"We could not have done it better," continued the little boy.

"But—" Charlotte was bewildered—"but—you yourself, are you not *mestizo*?"

From the low collar of the little boy's blue denim coat there swept up so angry a flush that she started back.

"He is Spanish," said Vernay to her in a gentle aside. He was glad that he now spoke sufficient Spanish to smooth this over with the boy whose choler was rising, augmented by who knew what thoughts of these barbarous people who were in possession of the city. "I have been talking to the Spaniards in the *fondas*," he continued directly to the boy. "I know the difference."

The little boy was beating himself on the breast. He was stammering with rage. "I—I—" he managed to say, through his choking indignation—"I am Paraiso—I am as yourself, *señor*! No Spaniard of the *fondas*!" His words stuck in his throat, he stopped and with a curiously mature gesture ran his finger around between his collar and his thin neck. "*Caballero*—" they made out.

Well—it was a relief from Charlotte's disapproval. She made no move to go. She was looking at the little boy and her face had softened. Vernay brooded that he had better hold on to the child for a while, until she had had time to forget the affair of the waiter. He gravely invited Paraiso to accept his hospitality as represented by a fresh mound of ice cream. He was interested to discover in his attitude

toward the mirthless boy a slight embarrassment, a more than slight gratification when Paraiso signified his willingness to try a new sensation—a sweet that could burn one's tongue.

"*Seguro.*" said Paraiso. "I find it hard to comprehend a *dulce* that can burn, but I will try it." The spirit of the Conquistadores shone in his black, cavernous eyes.

The business of ordering the ice cream over:

"I was never before in this place," remarked Paraiso to Vernay. "I ran away from the Paris-Manila, near by, because I was weary of standing beside my mother while she bought many yards of muslin. It is no place for a man—the Paris-Manila. And so I was looking into the shop as you, *señor*, treated the native in the proper manner. But what sort of place is this, where all the goods on the counters are of the colours of muslins and are yet to be eaten?"

Vernay glanced hastily at Charlotte and looked away again; she had not been amused at what the boy had said about the waiter. Damn the waiter—more than he had damned him over the spilt ice cream! He would certainly hold on to this kid, for a while at least. Paraiso had plunged his sombre gaze into the plate of ice cream that had been set before him; he had plunged his spoon into its pink offensiveness. He remarked affably:

"This *dulce* that you say burns tastes like the Tyrone Alicante that we get from Spain, every Christmas, in the tin boxes that one opens as sardines are opened. It is——" He refilled his mouth, which spread to a great cavity of throat.

"Better not eat it so fast!" Charlotte spoke for the first time, smiling at the little boy as if she had not before sat silently in her chair and frozen Vernay.

"It is not good manners to eat so fast; I know that well," remarked Paraiso, sending another spoonful down his throat. Then two startlingly large tears rolled down his very white cheeks, and he winked rapidly. He shrieked: "Ah-h-h—it is the tickling in the nose! It is the suffering in the throat! It is the killing in the chest!" He subsided into sobbed exclamations of "*Dolor de estómago! Dolor . . .*"

"Here—rub your nose!" commanded Vernay, who wanted to laugh and who did not know how Charlotte would take it if he did.

Paraiso rubbed his nose. He rubbed his stomach. He was gracious as he said to Vernay, "Of course I realize, *señor*, that it was not poison you gave me—for you are not a Filipino."

Oh, confound it! The kid insisted on harping on that Filipino idea that always set Charlotte crazy!

"—But I must eat rapidly, *señor*." Paraiso was again talking. Vernay hoped that he would let up on the Filipino idea. "My mother might come after me; she must have bought many yards of the muslin. This *dulce* is most pleasing, now that I have become accustomed to its burn, which is like hell-fire truly and shows, the *padre* would say, that Heaven and Hell are very close together."

Mrs. Robins, her arms full of parcels, came in from the street, made some purchases at the counter and approached.

"How nice and *idle* you look," she said graciously. "I wish that *I* could find time to play! How absurd the whole town is, anyway: always bustling and shrieking, and nothing accomplished. There is a wild stout Spanish woman in the Paris-Manila shop. She is screaming in hysterics. I made out that she has just lost her only surviving son, and that she puts it down to the arrival in Manila of the Americans."

"*Mi madre!*" shouted Paraiso, displaying a surprising knowledge of English. He ran from the shop, alternately wiping his mouth with the back of his hand and waving it to Vernay.

The sun was getting ready to set; that was evident. Its resentful glare at the artificiality of Clarke's plate-glass windows was the glare of a cross, sleepy male. The people who still loitered at the tables hurried with their bills, hurried out to the Plaza Moraga where vehicles of all sorts waited. The sun, out here, was a hard sleeper; never an extra wink of the eye when once it had gone to bed. It blazed one moment, and the next moment it had dashed out of sight below the horizon, kicking behind it tumbled blankets of darkness. One after the other the vehicles trundled off. The native carramatas and quelises, the drivers' feet on the shafts, took their burdens of starched Tagalog women to safety in the Binondo or Quiapo. Wealthy mestizas stepped grandly into calesas. Two custard-coloured fat little women proudly seated themselves in the only automobile in Manila—a maroon limousine.

"The Cacho sisters, indeed!" complained Mrs. Robins at Vernay's elbow. "The money that those two are making

out of us!" she sighed. "Good American money paid for that limousine. And such a sight—maroon, with yellow women!"

"Rather good colour scheme, I was thinking," Vernay dared to contradict; and got a stare for his temerity. "After all, they have a certain artistic sense, these people." But he was not sure whether he said it to placate Charlotte or whether he really believed it. It did not matter.

"Well!" exclaimed Mrs. Robins, who had paid no further attention to what he had ventured, "one of 'em is actually beckoning to me! I'll see what the creature wants. They do have the loveliest things in their shop . . ." She wandered across the banquetta to the kerb at which the maroon limousine lingered. Its Tagalog chauffeur was scornfully erect on his seat above an engine instead of a bony horse, and his superiority to his fellow-men was such as to lift his uniform cap on the rise of his stiff pompadour.

One of the Cacho sisters purred:

"*Señora*, at last we have for your inspection jewels worthy of your eminence—the jewels of state of one of the old Spanish families, which they must—Mother of God, it is of a retribution!—sell at last." In the voice was a creaminess to match the cream yellow of the woman's skin. Her pretty face smiled ingratiatingly, her little dimpled lovely hands gesticulated with grace. "*Señora*, you will find nothing to equal them at the Monte de Piedad."

"All right," said Mrs. Robins with scant courtesy, and turned her back. She beckoned Charlotte and Vernay to the Dougherty Wagon which, swung high on its leather springs,

overtopped everything in the Plaza excepting the maroon limousine.

Vernay breathed a deep sigh of relief and forgave Mrs. Robins for ugliness which hurt his eyes. Paraiso's ice cream had exhausted the money in his pocket; he had been remembering that he no longer had calesa fare. In sight of motley Manila, for the conquering race to leave on foot would have been unprecedented; and at any time, for a man to walk a girl home, when that girl was already cross and hot and presumably waiting for a chance to nag, would have been poor policy. . . . He smiled with affection at Mrs. Robins, with self-respect he returned the salute of the soldier who had sprung down to throw open the door of the Dougherty. He assisted the ladies up the two high steps into the interior of the Dougherty which smelt of mules. The soldier, back on the box-seat, yelled at the mules who gave their smell to the whole contraption; the mules stood stock still and thought it over. The soldier yelled again.

"Why—damn your ornery hides—" he whooped, and said over his shoulder, "Excuse me, ma'am, but they don't listen to any better arguments than them!"

The mules listened to the arguments and leaped forward into the mass of calesas. They executed side kicks at squealing little horses and awkwardly galloped around the corner of the Plaza. The heavy Dougherty swung out to the side, hit the building at the corner of the Muelle, and righted itself as they tore on to the Bridge of Spain. There was little traffic at this hour on the Bridge of Spain. The Spanish ladies whose horses had squealed were now driving

back up the Escolta to the shops. They would not be present on the Luneta for the beauty of the sunset, and that further beauty of the gun salute to the flag at retreat. The Spanish ladies would fool away time in the shops until the rumbling, impacted sound of the American gun should reach them; then only would they turn toward the Luneta, rolling haughtily on to the ellipse after the last notes of "The Star Spangled Banner" had followed the sun for the night.

"You step on the same people's toes every day in Manila," Mrs. Robins jerked out in time to the Dougherty's bounces on its leather springs which were too loose. "That sloppy Spanish woman who was upsetting the Paris-Manila is the very one whose jewels the Cachos are arranging to peddle to the Americans. The old lady will grab the biggest price any of us will give. But the help of our money will never make her unbend to us. She lives in one of those old stucco houses not three blocks away from the Cuartel; but has she ever called on the wife of the Commanding Officer?" Mrs. Robins in her indignation became so swollen as to seem on the point of filling her clothes. "She looks the other way when we meet in the street!"

Charlotte was avoiding a direct glance at Vernay. Several times he had tried to smile disarmingly at her, and each time she had contrived to speak to Mrs. Robins. He must have this out with Charlotte. It was ridiculous for them to fight over these silly natives. He would think of how silly it was, and force his attention back to what the two ladies were saying, and straighten himself on the

slippery brown leather of the narrow and immensely uncomfortable front seat, and try not to step on any feet; and he got but a sketchy impression of what they really were talking about. Words would come to him—and drift out of his consciousness.

"And what is this I heard to-day—that you actually went to one of their *bailes*?" from Mrs. Robins.

"Yes," said the girl calmly; she was smiling faintly. "It was given by the parents of one of my pupils, and they invited me particularly."

"In a nipa shack?" from Mrs. Robins.

"You had to go up a ladder to get in at the front door—the only door." Charlotte's voice was on an even keel.

Mrs. Robins made a noise in her throat, and the noise vied with the creaking of the leather springs of the Dougherty. "It is unnecessary to ask if the hosts and their guests were respectful to you?"

Charlotte was looking out from her side of the Dougherty. The last rays of the sun were pouring in, making gold lace of her hair. "They were—" her voice was on a flat level—"quite kind and friendly."

"How long are you going to stick it out?" demanded the Colonel's wife.

Charlotte said:

"My contract is for the usual two years."

"It's to be hoped you'll marry," stated the Colonel's wife. "One of the decent young Americans who are out on business. That is a legitimate reason for being out here—business. This Mr. Saulsbury, for instance, who came out with us—I

hear he is doing wonders. These natives—" she explained how it happened that a civilian should do wonders—"were sure to go mad over his idea that they could build houses that would be grander than anything the whites have."

Vernay realized that he had lost track of Saulsbury. He must hunt him up. Good fellow; very amusing, he had been on the Transport. Bounce . . . bounce . . . went the Dougherty along the Bagumbayan.

"I'm sorry that I haven't time to take you for a drive," Mrs. Robins was saying. "I am giving a dinner party at seven, and the cook is waiting for these things from Clarke's. There is something to be said for your state of single blessedness—no cooks to bother you into fits. That *chino* of mine——"

Very real good looks had Charlotte, to stand up under the hard work of teaching—Vernay was idly thinking. The other American women had dried up as to skin and hair, and even their finger nails had cracked and looked scaly. He stared with distaste at Mrs. Robins.

"——and so extravagant! My dear, you won't believe me when I tell you the amount of my Commissary bills! But they are nothing to Mrs. Jennings' bills, month after month. I don't see how Captain Jennings pays them. And it isn't only the Commissary. Clothes, my dear! The woman dresses like a millionaire's wife. *Captain Jennings* can't pay her bills—that's certain!"

Catty—scrawny women were—scratching at each other's reputations, censoring everyone's morals except their own. When he had landed he had had doubts of the morals of

every woman on board the Transport, thanks to the evangelical work of their own ranks. He wondered if Charlotte would ever be that way—with her claws out. The glow from the crimson sky behind Corregidor showed her face as soft and yielding; but he knew that she was not soft and yielding.

Mrs. Robins was saying, surprise in her voice:

"I am so lonely, Miss Carson; a very lonely woman! You must run in and see me. It is strange, but I don't like any of the women in the regiment. The wife of the Lieutenant-Colonel used to be the greatest comfort to me, helping me with my entertaining, helping me with my shopping. But she went off on so many trips to China and Japan—and—well, the Colonel couldn't afford to let *me* go; and a Lieutenant-Colonel's pay being smaller, and they having three children—*where did she get the money?* Of course, I shouldn't dream of saying such a thing to anyone but you."

Vernay drew back on the narrow and slippery front seat. He was thinking, with disgust, that talk never failed in Manila. The female American, out here, specialised in an uninterrupted flow of talk. Better tear the reputation of an intimate friend to tatters that matched the tatters of black clouds which always scudded before the sunset, than fail in chat—he meditated. He hoped Mrs. Robins was not seeing how much he disliked her; if she suspected, she would use that tongue against him, most likely. But Mrs. Robins was remarking affably:

"You dear boy—you haven't been to see me for a long

time! You must look upon my house as your home, Mr. Vernay. Whenever you want to drop in for a little chat with a woman old enough to be your mother—" she simpered in denial of her words—"you know where to come! You, too, Miss Carson—Charlotte, I am going to say, *for your family's sake*—you must come to see me." She began to collect her packages from where they had been bouncing over Vernay's knees. "I am going to let the Wagon take you two on to the Luneta," she announced graciously. "You might enjoy the concert, even though I am obliged to leave you; and I do love giving pleasure to young people!"

The mules executed a humorous stampede; halted at the door of the Cuartel; beat a tattoo on the cobble-stones, and bit each other, their lips curling away from teeth as long and yellow as a Chinaman's. Mrs. Robins, assisted by Vernay and the soldier, clambered backwards down the two steps with a great show of weedy legs. She waved her hand airily.

"Enjoy yourselves!" she said.

"Giddap!" said the soldier to the mules.

"What did you mean by what you said about the natives at the *baile* being disrespectful to you?" Vernay demanded of the girl as the Dougherty jolted toward the Santa Lucia Gate.

"Did I say that? I was quite sure that I said nothing of the sort," replied Charlotte composedly.

"You gave me to understand that, whether you said it or didn't say it," he stood his ground.

"Oh—well—if you must know—although I don't grant

your right—they *are* funny. Peculiar, I mean. The children are all right—absolutely all right. But I don't understand—I can't see a reason for the parents and friends of the parents always being amused at something that they don't *say*. They are awfully, formally polite, and they are laughing behind it. They say '*señorita*' with bows that almost bend them double; I haven't seen them bow that way at any time except when they say that word. And they say it so much oftener than is in the least necessary."

"And it makes you nervous?" He was trying to get at it. Her account did not seem to him very much to bother over.

"No!" said Charlotte. "Never! I am *never* nervous!"

"Do you think that it is at all dangerous for you to be living out there near your school—away from the other Americans?" He ought not to drop this until he found out whether the girl were frightened. If she were frightened it seemed to him that she ought to tell him. But she said she was not nervous. . . . Charlotte was reliable. He sat looking at her and thinking how very reliable she was; wondering whether the fact of his knowing so absolutely that she was to be relied upon for the perceptibly pleasant qualities of good sense and balance was what made her lack the charm of something on which he would not be able to count so definitely. Home had been full of things—and girls—on which, and on whom, he could count in just this way. Out here, so far from home, Charlotte—it seemed to him as he looked at her—would have sprung more allure if she had possessed more of the veiled charm, the suggestion of the forbidden to know. Charlotte was the wholesome

fruit which might be seen done up charmingly in windows on expensive streets of American cities. He stared away from her to where the afterglow flamed above the Wall. There must be poisonous fruits of jungle trees. He must not go back home before he had tasted of fruits that might kill.

Charlotte was answering his question:

“They’ll never do anything except say ‘*señorita*’ that way.”

V

IT was not much fun to prowl around Manila with the two companions of his trip out.

Charlotte considered history as a study of conditions that she could better; while to Vernay it was the record of lives that had really been lived, of sufferings that had really been suffered, of loves and hates and delights of the senses that had left their imprint on the places wherein they had come about. His skin registered a vibration from the old things around him. Going through the musty streets of the Intramuros he felt that he was turning back to times and creeds and emotions of which he consciously knew nothing. Charlotte said that all of this was silly.

"It's awfully silly," she said. "That sunstroke jangled your nerves. I'm rather worried about you," she continued, looking closely at him. "The idea of your saying—and being so taken by it—that everything is old except the Americans! And all about the beauty of this 'secret-saturated' masonry! Of course it's saturated with secrets—but they aren't beautiful secrets. I do wish you'd brace up, Tom."

And all of this was good common sense, and it revolted him. It was a pity that Charlotte's mind was incapable of holding the meat of history. Charlotte could stand in the shadow of the crumbling monasteries and abuse the frailes; Charlotte could step aside from a passing procession of

bedizened images and not see the idea underneath the tinsel.

"Can't you feel," he asked her, "that we have no right to try and change all this? Can't you feel that it is a—a sort of insult, for us to look at the whole thing so coolly—to plan improvements that it don't want?"

"No, I can't, Tommy," she said flatly. "I think a person has to keep up with his country, and abide by the ways of his country—think as his country thinks—do his country's work as his country wants him to do it. That's what I feel—badly expressed."

"But we grabbed this city; and it doesn't rightly belong to us."

Charlotte stared. "Then who does it belong to?"

"Those old dead men who built it."

They were walking along the narrow streets of the Intramuros. They were hustled by occasional chinos whose long poles, swinging over their shoulders and weighted at either end by square packages of linens, swept the banquettas clear. The tinny sound of a piano came from one of the houses—a waltz that swept smoothly along, tinny too. Spaniards lolled in tipped-back chairs outside the fondas; a fat man was picking a guitar—a different air from the waltz on the tinny piano, but the city melted the tunes into harmony. Charlotte's eyes had a new look; she had not glanced at him since the music started.

The end of a pole brushed the girl off the banquetta, so that she stepped down beside Vernay and caught his arm to steady herself after the sharp descent.

"Look here," said Vernay. "Do you know, I never see

you except on the street where everybody can hear what we say?"

"I haven't much time, except for these Sunday afternoon sight-seeings," she said, seeming interested in the chino's pole-balancing. "I'm awfully busy. It's work—to correct examination papers when the poor kiddies can't really write yet."

"Well, I . . . you know perfectly well that I want to see you. Will you go to the hop at the Club Friday, week after next, with me?"

But why could he not have again asked her, right then, to marry him? he thought afterward. Instead of that, he had gone back to what he knew bored her. He had tried to make her see what he meant about a race being unable to own a city because they had captured it and later on paid money for it; that a city must have a consciousness of its own—must have a resentment that was a conscious resentment.

"The air is thick with it," he tried to make her see. "Don't you sometimes feel that it is pressing down upon your head—this thing that is being held back on you? You are so intelligent: can't you see that a city which was called 'the very loyal city' will be loyal to its founders, and not to its captors?"

She had, at that, turned her eyes fully upon him; and she was laughing. "Look here, Tommy—if you're going to talk that sort of nonsense to me at the hop, I won't go with you!"

He could not decide why it was that he held back the

question on his lips. She was ripening in the browning sun, adapting herself to the cool linen frocks made by chino tailors, and to the filmy embroidered effects which Inez turned out for the "so-reech-Americanas." Walking beside him through the swarming streets, she was always beautifully cool to look at. She had the ash-blond suggestion of coolness. She belonged to the revealing light of the sun; he thought about her so long as the daylight lasted. He wanted to touch Charlotte, this afternoon on the banquette—touch her more personally than the brushing of his sleeve constituted a touch. The sun had been shining on her. But the fat Spaniard with a guitar had slid into a love song; he had joined his throaty voice to the guitar: sliding down the notes, the words to a dove-girl sliding with the notes; impassioned, making a man shiver! And the sun went down behind Fort Santiago, and he was glad that the flag had already come down for the night and that the sun could take to the other side of the earth a picture of the old fort without the new flag.

And here was Saulsbury, sight-seeing with him on another Sunday afternoon. Saulsbury had signalled a calesa, saying that he could not tax his brain by walking in the stewing sun; he was not an army man whose business it was to kill himself. The calesa took them at a rattling pace down the Calle Rosario. The pony, whose hind-quarters touched the dashless calesa, of his own initiative dodged the coolies who filled the middle of the street; the cochero slept peacefully on his perch, only waking up when the coolies'

loads of wicker furniture nearly knocked him into the roadway.

Vernay did not care for the Rosario, which was Extramuros. But Saulsbury was awake to the fact that the tall structures in which chino families perched above their shops were badly constructed. The houses seemed to bulge out over the banquettas; and this bulging, this suggestion of teeming life inside upper storeys, suggested nothing to Saulsbury besides the lack of a proper stiffening of wire in cement. He kept saying so.

The Rosario smelt pungently. Pickles, and preserves that smelt like pickles—all sorts of dead animals that you fancied the denizens ate; and copra—always copra. And chinos. But the chino smell was not bad. It never smelt like dirty clothes or dirty skin; it smelt like age, even if the chino happened to be a baby. The chino babies were amusing; turned over to the Filipino mother, if girls, to be dressed in little bell skirts and black tapis, to wear little chinelas on their little feet, and to look forward to marrying natives—if boys, to be toggled out as Chinamen, and to have scalp-locks left on shaven heads as a start for future queues.

Saulsbury, hanging out of the calesa in order to see the bulge of the tall houses, was filled with glee.

“I tell you, Vernay—these Islands don’t know what a good turn of fate they’ve had at last! A few more years of us—we’ve just got under way, as yet—and there won’t be one of the present rotten structures left on the map. It’ll be a great little town, once we’ve built it over.”

And Vernay was indiscreet enough to say, “We’ll spoil it!”

"You don't mean to tell me that you aren't up-to-date enough to realize what a difference it'll make to the business of the Islands when investors, coming out, take a look around and see fine new concrete-and-steel-frame office buildings—and shops with enough light in 'em to see what you're buying—and everything just as near like a city in the U. S. as we can make it? You can see that, can't you? It isn't your line of business to see those points, Vernay, I know that; but try to see it, won't you?" he pleaded.

"You look upon them as a bale of goods that we purchased," objected Vernay. But he knew it would make no difference to Saulsbury—this grumble.

It made no difference at all. Saulsbury said "Huh? . . . I'm calculating how long it'll be before we can induce 'em to build high enough to warrant elevators. That would mean larger contracts for cement."

"Why don't you spend more time in other parts of the city?" Vernay asked him. "You could get some idea of what suits the climate. New York buildings wouldn't suit the climate; and they would spoil the looks of things, besides."

"You sure haven't got a business brain," taunted Saulsbury. But his laugh, as he went on, was somewhat puzzled. "And I guess you haven't got the army brain either, Vernay—you say you don't like their ideas of hygiene. Remember what I was saying to you the day you came down with that sunstroke? I'm not sure you aren't one of those fool artists, who want things to be in the last stages of dry rot before they'll take the trouble to squint at 'em. Or maybe a poet." And he lapsed into indifferent silence.

They had started out to inspect a bridge which had been built by Americans; and it was only fairly handsome, and Saulsbury said that the concrete of its construction was not up to the quality supplied by his own firm. They hung over the rail and looked down at the water-lettuces floating on the greasy-looking water of the Pasig. The surface of the river was thick with these plants which looked like baby cabbages; and through them pushed the river craft. Bancas and lorchas toward the middle of the wide stream; and to either side, banked against the land and settled down to somnolence while the families got at their daily occupations—washing their clothes, washing their hair with Go Go bark suds, washing their children and fishing those children out of the river when they fell in—the cascoes. Thousands of them. Nipa awnings—bamboo poles to kick them along—out-riggers. A lorcha slid under the bridge; it had painted on its bow the name “Jesús.”

“Oh—but isn’t that going too far?” Saulsbury half laughed and half gasped; and pronounced the word in the English way.

There was a fraile walking over the bridge; and the natives drew aside and bowed, and some of them muttered, while one little boy with his shirt-tails tucked in pulled his hat off. When the fraile had passed, the little boy whose shirt-tails proved him to be white turned to the two young men and politely corrected their pronunciation of the name of the casco. The little boy’s eyes were large and mournful and dark, but they lit into a smile as he recognized Vernay.

"It's the *Teniente* who so nobly chastised the filthy native!" he shouted.

"Not that I'm shocked, young fellow—" Saulsbury broke in—"but what's the meaning of such a name for a boat? Many countries, many ways. I'm here to learn, you might say. Not to learn your ways would be stupid for a business man. I couldn't change 'em for you, could I, unless I'd already learned 'em?"

"It is a native name," said Paraiso, off hand. "We have a very good and fairly honest *muchacho* named Jesús."

"Say—" Saulsbury nudged Vernay—"we couldn't beat that ourselves, could we? I'd heard the Dons never joked!"

He stared at Paraiso, and Paraiso stared back. Paraiso's gaze went slowly and deliberately over the whole, large, handsome body, the handsome white linen suit, the expensive panama. He spoke astonishingly good English, and he asked with a very insolent intent: "You are in trade out here, *señor*?"

"Out here to show you how to build," said Saulsbury heartily. "Name of Richard Saulsbury, young fellow." And went off to inspect the foundations of the bridge. He expected, he said, to find them immensely superior to those of the old Spanish bridges.

Vernay made Paraiso say it again and again—the name of the bridge—in order to hear that sonorous, grand, both clipped and rolling Castilian. The Puente de Ayala! A nerve crawled underneath Vernay's healthy clear skin. He remembered that when he had been studying history his

then more youthful skin had so crawled at the name Plantagenet—and that he had known it crawled not at the pagantry suggested but, solely, at the sound of the name. He listened to Paraiso, and the words came to him through a haze of pure bliss: the bridge had been named for the Conquistador, that Ayala who had used his sword in the service of his country; and who had lived here afterward, died here, and left his name to carry that sword along through the generations.

“So the Ayalas still live in Manila?” he asked the boy; and he knew that it would be a pleasure to him if he were told that somewhere in the Intramuros—for of course they would be living in the Intramuros!—were people with this wonderfully echoing name.

The boy said simply: “That is my own name, *señor*.”

Vernay stared. “Then why didn’t you tell us?”

“*Señor*—” and for the first time there was heat in the boy’s voice—“my father says that we have often been beaten, but never before bought. . . . The *señor* who is with you today,” he added with seeming inconsequence, “talks too much; he is evidently a *rich* American.”

Vernay knew little of children, and felt himself at a loss for a reply. But he understood Paraiso’s father.

Saulsbury reappeared. “Come on!” he breezed. “This structure is O. K.—built by Americans. The only point I don’t get is the name they gave it. What’s that? The historical significance? Well—it ain’t history they’re in need of, out here; it’s sanitation—it’s up-to-dateness—it’s a future. What on earth is the use of studying the history of

these little blobs of land? Now, you leave things to us; you've licked 'em—you army and navy ginks—and that's about all you can do for 'em. It's my sort that have got to get in the saddle now. Next bridge we build will be called Smith, or Jones, or Johnson Bridge. No history: *future!*"

"What gets me," Saulsbury said as the three jogged back along the streets of the Extramuros—the chino streets that were getting ready to put up their shutters for the night when the swarming mixed families would sit behind closed doors and barred shutters and swelter—"what gets me is the remarkable inefficiency of the Spaniards. The natives hate their guts, and no mistake. But you see if they don't respect us, sooner or later. It's my opinion that a native won't respect you unless you get the dollars to make him take off his hat to you; yes, and teach him how to make his own dollars. They don't want this schooling. What they want—what they really do respect—is the strong hand that holds the money bags. Business!" Saulsbury had a trick of seeming to put the words for that which he himself respected in capitals. "Nothing doing out here during all those hundreds of years when the Dons held the Islands. The niggers are as lazy as they were when the Spaniards got here. Muddled—the whole job; muddled!"

Saulsbury's words spewed through the streets of the Intramuros. They had turned in at the Parian Gate; and the loud cheerful condemnation hit against the rusted portcullis. Vernay had the fancy that the useless, superannuated windlass with its dejected chain which no longer held to its tight

coils, but which sagged and rattled with the looseness of a thing with no pride left, rattled because it was shuddering at taunts that had come upon it in an old age which was no longer respected.

"I never want to leave Manila," he found himself saying. He was surprised at his words; he had not until now realized that in Manila he felt—at home? Not at home; for home meant the things to which he was accustomed, while Manila meant the things that he would never understand, the things that he could never see.

Saulsbury laughed at him; reminded him that he, Saulsbury, was the one who would stay. "Not that I'd stay a minute if it wasn't for the money in it."

And all this time, between them was the boy Paraiso, his dark gaze unblinkingly upon Saulsbury.

"The only redeeming feature is the *señoritas*," Saulsbury was continuing. "Cutest little tricks I ever ran across! I could tell you about one——"

"Don't forget the child!" warned Vernay.

And again Saulsbury laughed at Vernay's words. "I'll bet you he knows! He's a spinnacher. They're on to the charms of the *señoritas*; else, why the mixed breeds?"

Paraiso said nothing.

Saulsbury argued with Vernay. "Hey," he urged, "don't be so solemn! They start early out here. Tropics, y'know. Equatorial precosity. That so, young fellow?" He nudged Paraiso.

The morbid pale growth of Vernay's fancies seemed reflected on the pale face of the little boy, whose sallow white-

ness of skin never changed. This unchanging deadly whiteness seemed a part of the old things around them as they hurtled through the streets. It was a part of the old buildings, the old gardens, the old Moat filled with water that was old; of the old smells that were pleasant and unpleasant as were the scenes over which they had blown since the first Ayala had come out. Watching the imperturbability of the boy, Vernay felt alarmingly young and green and callow. Out here even the children were old. He remembered the loud little boys and girls at home. This pale boy was different. There was a look in his eyes that was thousands of years old.

It was surprising to him that no one of the Americans saw these things.

"Look here, Saulsbury," he began, trying to explain, "don't you see anything except the—the girls? And the bad building construction? Don't you ever get the feeling that something out here *frowns*?"

But with Saulsbury's smiling gaze upon him, he ceased. He felt young—as Paraiso had never been young—when Saulsbury smiled that way.

"Don't you get it—" he started again, when Saulsbury had gone into a shop and had reappeared still smiling with the same amusement—"don't you get the idea that we don't belong out here?"

"I'd hate to think we did!" promptly replied Saulsbury. "But then, neither do the spinnachers, for the matter of that. The *señoritas*, now—they belong to the soil. It's their bit of the world."

“Not the Intramuros!”

“But I don’t care a damn about the Walled City; it’s too smelly. It’s positively fetid. It may be better, though,”—fairly—“after the Americans blow a few more openings in the Wall. What they need is fresh air. Electric fans instead of punkahs. Hygiene. Plumbing, and sewers that work all the time instead of when they feel like it.” He pinched Paraiso’s white cheek. “This kid, now—he’d be a wholesome kid if he lived with the right plumbing! . . . Where’ll I drop you, Vernay? Club?”

It was a relief to Vernay that Saulsbury was a civilian and could not burst into the Club with him. Vernay and the boy got out of the calesa and stood for a time on the banquetta. They did not speak. The man and the child knew that they were in harmony with each other, and with this hoary little city which was itself an exile in a tropical land. The stained walls of the Club were flushing pink in the last rays of the sun—warmly smiling. And yet, Vernay remembered, inside those pinkish walls was the lattice with noises behind it—noises which at this date he would grant might be rats, or barking lizards, but which he rejoiced to believe had been put into the life of those rooms by spying monks. The monks and the artisans had bequeathed conscious life to the stones with which they had builded. It was a very loyal city; they were very loyal blocks of stone; and their loyalty would always be to the Spaniards who had founded the city and not to the newcomers. Vernay laid his hand against the smiling pinkish wall of the Club; and he was filled with the

conviction that it quivered in response. He had sometimes experienced this flashing perception of life in the stones; the flash gave him the sensation of a creeping nearer of the unknown, such as he had felt at the name Ayala; but not before had one of the stained walls of the Intramuros flushed pink at sight of him. It got into his head that the flush and the smile were for this little Ayala who stood so silently beside him. The friendship of an Ayala was opening to him the friendship of the Walled City of the Conquistadores!

He looked down at the little boy who was waiting patiently. The child looked lonely and young and helpless in the gathering gloom. Vernay offered to see him home. But Paraiso said that he had only waited to bid the Teniente good-bye; it was the hour when he accompanied his sister for her paseo on the Wall, where the Ramp ascends.

Vernay quivered at this hint of family life going on behind the large double-doors of the houses in the Intramuros. He had often stood before those doors with their heavy brass double-knockers; the heads of lions with rings in their mouths was the favorite design.

"Your—sister?" he said, rather timidly, his new joy in the friendship of Paraiso holding him back from direct questioning.

"Si, señor," replied Paraiso indifferently. He added with more feeling, "It is on her account that we leave Manila. And I do not wish to leave Manila!"

But this was a devastating thing to do! The Ayalas to leave Manila which they had helped to found!

"My sister is now very old, *señor*. She was nineteen last month. And she has not yet a husband because my parents intend for her a husband of Spain. We return to the good Spain to hunt that husband. Soon we shall have sold our hemp lands in Panay to give us money for the husband."

"And you hate that?"

Paraiso shrugged. "It is the hand of God! The hand of God falling heavily on my sister. She shrieks, and says she does not wish to go to Spain and marry with some dreadful little man whose eyes will bore; she wishes to marry with some so tall man whose eyes are blue. *Mi madre* then locks Dolores up in her room, and Dolores hisses through the so largely accommodating keyhole that she will not have a man who shakes his hands around in the air; she wants a man who, when he has the *caliente cabeza*, brings his fist down into the palm of the other hand. It is a large keyhole, to accommodate the iron key that so often hangs on the wall above *mi madre's* prie-dieu; wherefore, it is easy for Dolores to shriek through it and for the household to hear. . . . But me—I do not wish, either, to leave Manila."

"But I don't understand," interrupted Vernay, who was sincerely shocked and at the same time immensely gratified. This smacked of the blood that had built, and used, the dungeons underneath the Wall. "Why, if neither you nor your sister wish to go to Spain, do they lock her up and leave you at large?"

"*Señor*, it is simple! My sister is devout, and obeys our parents and the *padre*. But when she goes with me to

watch the sunset from the top of the Wall, she smiles at American officers. She does penance for it; and then she smiles again. Penances appear to do little good with girls. Is it not strange—this smiling of girls?"

VI

THE smiling of girls! It was necessary to have some of it, in Manila. It was suggested to the nerves by the fact that, wherever one turned by day or night, perfumes drenched the body until they found those nerves and ministered to them. And the heat—enervating, setting up a languor in which you were too drowsy to think.

The dance music at the Club, on those nights when dinner parties were given—the dancing following the dinners—when within his arms some joking American girl met his advances half way, met his eyes with candour, flirted as hard as he had ever seen on Flirtation Walk: there were thrills in all of this. On these occasions he was again the cadet; and he liked it—while the band alternated between waltzes and two-steps. He liked it because he liked to dance. But he was used to it.

What he did not like were the intervals between dances when he took the young creature, with whom he had just waltzed as languidly as if he loved her, into the patio for a breath of air. These girls came from regiments stationed all over the Provinces; and they commented, with that queer sense of humour that the tropics seemed to produce in women, upon all manner of things tending to destroy romance.

“Zamboanga?” one of them shrieked. “You don’t mean to tell me that you’d like to go there? Why, it’s the measliest hole! There’s a ditch to bring the drinking water down

to us from the hills, and it ran dry one time and we walked along the banks and counted dead dogs, and cats, and three Moro babies, all stuck head down in the mud! Triple extract of dead animals on the ambergris base of native baby! Cute; isn't it?"

Before he had recovered—his arms had relaxed their hold on this slim and laughing thing, although they were again gliding over the floor—she had gone on, thoughtfully: "I suspect, from the oily look of that dirty water in the Moat, that you'd find babies in it—head down in the mud, all-same Zambo."

At the end of the dance, when he had given her up to her next partner, he overheard as he walked away: "I don't see how they could have said, at the Point, that he was such a spoonoid! He's stupid. Dead as a wedge. Nothing working but his feet—he *can* dance; I'll say that for him."

This girl was a blonde with very large and soulful blue eyes; angelic. Later on, in the patio, her voice came to him through the masses of potted plants; she was telling someone else about Zamboanga. It did no good for the Quartermaster to sterilize the drinking water down there, she said; because she had seen, as the water-carts went their rounds, that the Moro "boys" hung their bare feet in the day's drinking supply to cool them off. The officer who was with her guffawed.

"Oh, say!" he approved. "You're the real stuff! What a dandy little wife you'd make for some poor devil who had to serve in those parts!"

Which was perfectly true—for a man like the man who

had applauded her. Vernay shuddered. He would detest a wife who laughed at everything. At any rate, Charlotte did not laugh. She did not laugh because she was arguing the point. That was bad enough. He was not quite sure that a wife should have brains. The thing that he did not like about Charlotte was this very thing of her intelligent independence.

It was the Friday hop to which he had "dragged" Charlotte. And Charlotte, who danced well, was popular. He was glad of that. He resented it when the Service women slurred at her being a teacher. The only thing wrong with Charlotte, he told himself sullenly, was her fighting brain.

But he had to turn again to his own partner in the cooling off; and she was a young matron from Iloilo whose captain husband was, by hook or crook, keeping up one of the prettiest houses in that town. Vernay had heard of their entertaining every beatload of junketing Congressmen who touched at Iloilo. The young woman was telling him how she managed, and urging that he give her a chance to demonstrate it to him.

"I'll assure you a good dinner (I've got a wonderful cook); I'll have the General! That will show you how the animals feed in the Southern Islands."

How was a man from Manila to understand the remarkable shifts in this statement? Vernay showed his bewilderment.

"We never get a tip-top dinner, darling child," she explained, "unless the General is coming. Wu is strong on rank. With a star in sight he scours the market, steals from the neighbouring cooks, and otherwise gets together a dinner

fit for the exalted. Many's the time when, due to my forethought in inviting the right guests, we've enjoyed the Martins' lobsters, the Brewsters' pili nuts, the Lelands' mango-steens—which is what I call enterprise. The markets close at eight in the mornings; and when a boat gets in with people I want to grab on board—well, you can see how it is, can't you?" She giggled at his perplexity. "Never mind! That's what we women are for—in the Army! . . . The boats get in after the markets close: get that?"

She was busily fluffing her hair into a dizzier mass above her face. She leaned closer, and he saw her sherry-coloured eyes in the light from the paper lanterns high up in the tree. She had in the fluffed hair some Paris perfume, which took his mind off the gardens into which at this moment the moon was peeping. "Will you come down—on the *El Cano*, if you can get permission? I'll be home by then."

"Can you doubt it?" he asked, also leaning closer.

"That's all right, then!" She had a little tinkling, nervous giggle. "I heard you were rushing a schoolteacher; but I don't believe it of you! Be sure to let me know which boat. I'll have to fix it with the General. He's made an arrangement with me to come to my dinners when I need him on account of Wu. You see, here's the invariable schedule: I just go into the kitchen and say to Wu—who is fat and menacing—'Dinner this evening for twelve,' and he says—he always says it!—'No can do,' puts his little pipe back in his mouth, and puffs right in my face. Do you think I argue with him? I don't! I just send Pedro with a note to the General; and of course he brings back an acceptance. The

General's an angel! And then I say to Wu, quite casually, 'The General was coming to-night; but now I suppose he'll go to the Lelands'.'” Again the tinkling giggle. “Wu does the same thing each time I spring this on him. He belongs to another tong from the Lelands' cook. He puts his little pipe aside, gets to his feet with dignity, and announces, 'Can do chow. Missee gettee Genelal.'”

The breeze blew gusts of the Paris perfume at his nose. He knew that he would not go to Iloilo. But they went back into the ballroom walking close together. He had asked her for the usual sequence of waltz and two-step, and he swung her out on the floor with his head bent over her red-brown hair. She was one of these standardised army women; he would do the standardised thing. The Paris perfume standardised his emotions. It took the Ylang Ylang to swerve him from the trail of Flirtation Walk.

“I'm up here to buy table linens,” announced the young woman in his arms. “Somebody told me you were very artistic. Couldn't you draw me a monogram? Then we could run around to the embroiderers' and you could help me select the things. The last linens I bought, a perfectly adorable bachelor helped me.”

Mrs. Robins was sitting against the wall, her face swollen as she watched the lieutenants of her husband's regiment dancing. It was Mrs. Jennings who steered Vernay's reluctant feet in that direction.

“Haven't you any sense at all?” Mrs. Jennings hissed in his ear. “She's perfectly furious when the youngsters don't

dance with her. Now, you hike up at once and redeem yourself. She'll step all over you, but it's for the good of the Company. She'll say some damn thing to me if you don't."

Mrs. Robins seemed to demur. "You mustn't feel that you have to dance with the *old* people," she said icily, but getting to her feet as she spoke. "I am quite accustomed to being overlooked."

She did dance dreadfully. He gritted his teeth. She fixed him with her eye.

"Look out for that Iloilo jade," she warned. "She's about as bad an example of the 'gimme girls' as there is in the Islands. And she's a dreadful flirt. And how does her husband pay for that house in Iloilo? I've often wondered. The other ladies wonder too. I've told them what the house is like and what the rent is—it's far beyond his commutation of quarters!—and asked them how they thought he paid for it."

The dance came to an end before she had decided just how much villainy on the jade's part had paid for the house. She sank back against the wall and resumed her martyred expression.

"I suppose you will now go and hunt up some girl who will let you hold her too tightly! I daresay you noticed—at least, I trust you noticed!—that I do not allow this new and disgusting style of dancing to be tried on me. A slow waltz, with a decent space between the persons—wait a moment, Mr. Vernay: I am telling you this for your good! You are young; and you don't know how dreadful it looked,

just now, when you and that indecent girl from Zamboanga were twisting and bending and aping the professionals who danced the Merry Widow waltz."

"That's an old stunt, now," murmured Vernay apologetically. "Will you pardon me if I run off, Mrs. Robins? I dragged Miss Carson to-night and I see her beckoning."

"Oh—so you *are* rushing that schoolteacher. . . ."

Charlotte had come out of the dressing room where she had mended a torn ruffle.

"Oh—" she sighed, and tucked her hand in his arm—"I do love to see you like this! You're so—so natural to-night!"

She drifted into his arms for the last waltz. He forgot his irritation at the prevalent fashion of the older women in the Army establishing a lien on the bachelors. Charlotte's slight breasts came in contact with his starched white uniform, and through the stiffness of the linen duck sent into his own breast a familiar unrest, a familiar discontent with the existence of cloth barriers between himself and a girl with whom he danced. This must be love—this shake of the hands that held her, this catching of the breath when she lifted her head to look into his eyes. He had gone so far back on the road to West Point that he experienced a shock when the waltz changed to "Home Sweet Home" instead of to "Benny Havens O." This should have been Cullom Hall, and it was instead the old Army and Navy Club in the Walled City; it should have been the beginning of sentiment, and it was a struggle to hold tight to a sentiment which was slipping away from him. He knew this even while his hands trembled; and he also knew that that which

was slipping away was not sentiment for Charlotte alone but for all young American girls. And he was sorry, because to-night—although the band was not playing “Benny Havens O”—he was thinking tenderly of the days when he had been a cadet and had had his world bounded by West Point.

He made amends for it by asking Charlotte, and not the young woman from Iloilo, to go with him to the embroiderers’. Charlotte said cheerfully that she would go tomorrow afternoon, although she should stay at home and mark examination papers.

He slept lightly that night. The warmth of the air was purposefully enervating because he was to be held back . . . from something that he ought to find.

He fell into snatches of slumber, had dreams that he could not remember, and became wide awake for the rest of the night. His nerves had not done these tricks in the United States. But the United States is new. He had never before seen old things, lived in old rooms of old houses, walked along streets so old that only the dust was new because it blew in on the wind which was eternally reborn.

The noise behind the lattice was there—stealthy, speaking of all-seeing eyes where the noise came from. It was too late now for the Spaniards to be singing on the banquetta. The only noises were in the room. Noises across the floor, padded noises. But no one could get in the room, because he had locked the door and over the window was the bulgingreja. It was the noise of secrets trailing outside his ken.

What secrets?

He got up from his vast, carved bed and went to the reja.

Above the low buildings he could see the sky—moonlight with colours in it, and masses of brown clouds etched into fantastic shapes against the green and lemon. Twisted shapes reared their heads above the church of San Augustin—cloud hands speaking a sign language to those who could read. Up at the top of the arch of the sky, where it was blue like the sea in sunlight, the stars; close enough to look in at his *reja*; contracting, expanding, they seemed to be doing; signalling—that was it! And wait! The arch of the sky was not an arch? It was a liquid, and when *it* expanded it came down almost near enough for him to taste it. Queer—he was awfully near the sky to-night! The sky was not what he had always carelessly thought it to be; the sky was the thing that he was living, it was here in the dark room. . . . He should be able to force his mind to the leap into blackness that he felt was necessary if he was to find out what it was all about. . . . What he had felt since he had come to live in this old room—what the Southern Cross, leaning drunkenly on one elbow until it was tired and then changing to the other elbow, and winking drunkenly at what it saw—what that knew; and what the moon, sailing up over the Wall, knew.

There must be a bridge over the blackness that lay before understanding?

. . . But he knew that Charlotte would not set foot on that bridge, even if he found it. The bridge that Charlotte would consent to cross was a bridge that looked to him, in the sunshine, to be a secure footing enough; but that seemed, at night and under the moon, to shake and menace him.

. . . Another thing had menaced him—the thrill that dancing with Charlotte had given him. The emotion that she caused menaced the possibility of that leap after wisdom.

Scratching behind the lattice . . .

The day came as he leaned in the bulge of the reja. Popping up from the other side of the world. The green turned, in the flash of an eye, into red, and the lemon into gold. The clouds stopped talking on their fingers and massed to catch the rays which the sun would send up to knock on the door of night. And the bath of perfume freshened itself—and the earth, rested, bathed in it and made ready for the day ahead.

Vernay threw himself on the bed. He had an hour before it would be time for him to dress and rush to the Cuartel de España for the before-breakfast drill.

VII

“**S**AT up too late last night, didn’t you?” asked Captain Jennings at the early drill. He wanted his breakfast; the men wanted their breakfasts; and there was this confounded Butts’ Manual to be got through. And to such a double-damned sickening tune on the band! And everybody waving like windmills until they could not tell which were heat waves and which were their brains spewing out when they leaned over! And what good did it do? It did not even take off stomachs; look at the First Sergeant! Captain Jennings drew his hands down his own flat blouse and became more good-tempered. “Well—I don’t hang around the Club on hop nights. Got too much sense, my boy! I turn the old lady over to some bachelor and I skin home.” He blew a shrill blast on his whistle. “Fall in! What you mean by loafin’ on drill hour? Poke ’em up, Cootz, poke ’em up!”

“Yes, sir!” said Cootz with deferential alacrity. Cootz, the stout First Lieutenant, had himself been lolling against the side of the wall while the Captain talked to the Second Lieutenant; but he leaped into the blazing sunlight as if he did not know how to lean against a wall.

They got through. They always got through. Nobody ever died.

And the hour came around when Vernay, after his third bath that day, was escorting Charlotte to the embroiderers’

He had had to go for Charlotte—she lived in a boarding house out on Calla Real, Ermita. He knew that she was frightfully uncomfortable out there; she told him that she spent most of her time huddled under the striped mosquito net because if she came out she would be bitten until she would swell up on her hands and arms; and he was conscience-stricken to remember the sunken bath at the Club. But she was always pleasant about subjects other than the natives. He forgot to be conscience-stricken by the time they had reached the shop in the Intramuros where Charlotte had been told one could get the finest embroideries.

The Cacho sisters were fat cream spiders who expectantly waited in their shop for the so-good dinero of los Estados Unidos. Their hands were heavy with rings set with large and shallow diamonds that even in the dim light should have sparkled more than they did.

“Those diamonds look crafty to me!” whispered Charlotte while the Cachos were spreading out linen cobwebs. “Overlaid with something unwholesome, so that they’ve lost their souls!”

This was an odd thing for Charlotte to have said, and he stared at her; he had had no hint, in the sunlight with which he associated her in his fancy, that she could think things so nearly morbid. Not that he resented this particular case; there was something unwholesome about the two custard-coloured women who traded on misfortune. These, he remembered, were the women who had told Mrs. Robins about the jewels.

Charlotte was examining the delicacy of embroidered piña

with hands whose touch seemed suddenly to have acquired an avariciousness of their own, with eyes which seemed again shut to fantasy. She appealed to Vernay.

"Isn't it ravishing? . . . But their prices are the limit." And she proceeded to display skill in beating down those prices.

The flat awning at the street door was lifted, and against the flame of sunlight on the banquetta there were silhouetted for a moment the figures of two women whose heads were bundled in black lace. Little women, they seemed to Vernay; neither of them reached to his shoulder. The one who went directly to the counter was stout, and as she commandingly diverted the attention of the Cachos from Charlotte, she breathed hard and spoke in a heavy voice. The awning, after one or two flaps which let in streaks of bright light, had settled back into place against the door and the shop was again in shade; but Vernay could see that on her upper lip was the smudge of black hair. He saw this when he edged close enough to find out if she were the one who smelt of jasmine; but he knew that she was not the one. There had sounded on the floor as she bustled in the clatter of the wooden-heeled Tagalog chinela; the light from the moving awning had showed her dumpy form to be clothed in some abomination of baggy dressing-sacque hanging freely outside a black skirt that was too long in the back and too short in front; but, amazingly, from that mouth with its faint moustache there was coming the lovely clipped and liquid Castilian.

Dead white her face was, and out of its rolls of white-

ness her fine little nose jutted with assurance. She brought her hand down on the counter with assurance, and her heavy gold bracelets clanked in time with the clanking of long gold earrings which had fallen to the front of the black lace around her head.

The entire shop attended the little stout woman. Vernay and Charlotte, leaning on the counter with the heaps of piña and batiste crumpling under their elbows—the slim, quiet thing who had come in with the stout woman and who now lurked in the shadow—the Cachos, who with many obsequious “*Si, señora-s,*” surged along behind the counter to range up opposite that white hand which had come down with such authority: suspended life in the shop, while the short, puffing mass of flesh transacted her business. The Cachos’ manner was a nice mixture of effusion tempered with a cold and wary suspicion; their heavy cream lids hung before gleams of hatred; but on their full lips were unctuous smiles, and they rubbed their own hands together until beads of black collected.

Without turning her head the fat little woman rolled her dark eyes around in their roomy sockets until she could fix her gaze upon the two Americans. There was no blaze in the large eyes, only the opacity of complete indifference. There was insolence in her jutting nose.

“In the name of the good God,” she demanded in her deep voice, turning her eyes back to the apologetic Cachos, “is there no hour of the day when this *tienda* is free of the Americans?”

In one sentence she had managed to sweep into limbo both

the Americans and the Mestizas; for the shop was not a tienda. Vernay caught the significance, and felt a certain respect for this dauntless person who in adversity could hold her own. That she was in adversity he realized when she went about her business, which she did with a bold show of there being in the shop no human creature besides herself and the small dark-clad figure in the shadows. She was leaving her jewels with the Cachos. There poured out on the counter a collection of the daintiest things that Vernay had ever dreamed of. Pearls—pearls of every conceivable colour and size, and set in every conceivable way. Frosted gold had been worked into leaves for the blossoming of the pearls. Green-gold leaves for pink pearl roses, white-gold leaves for black pearl fuchsias, red-gold leaves and tendrils for bunches of yellow pearl grapes. Brooches, necklaces, combs . . .

It was when the stout little woman had put down on the counter a particularly beautiful comb of the grape design that Vernay heard an indrawn breath from the figure in the shadow. She had moved: he knew this because with the slight motion of her garments there had again floated out into the shop the scent of jasmine. She had bowed her head over whatever it was that she was holding in her hands. Neither she nor the stout woman wore high combs, and her mantilla fell softly and showed that the head was small and set very daintily on her neck. The rustle of her garments had attracted the attention of the other woman, and she turned sharply, and saw that Vernay too had looked into the shadowy corner.

"Dolores!" ordered the stout little woman. "The rosary!"

Dolores' hand was a cupped shrine for the rosary, which spilled over her slender fingers in drops of gold and coral. She had drawn near the counter reluctantly. There had been no clatter of chinelas. Vernay glanced down to where a slit of sunlight from underneath the awning was playing along the floor, and saw that her small feet had not "gone native."

"I do not wish to sell this rosary!" she said in a low voice. "I did not wish to sell the comb—nor my necklace!"

The stout little woman, with no unkindness but with decision, took the rosary from the girl's hand. "*Madre de Dios!*" she exclaimed. "Are not my own jewels going also? Me, I should as willingly stay in Manila! It is not for the love of myself that I sell out to go back; it is for the love of you, my daughter."

With the toss of the girl's head her mantilla fell away and showed, in a swift glimpse before her mother had hastily readjusted it, a white face and eyes that flamed, a high-bridged nose and deeply red mouth. She jerked away from her mother, and the older woman murmured angrily in her ear:

"We must hurry away from here! And mind you—no eyes!"

Vernay's heart was beating faster. The glimpse that he had had of the Spanish girl's face made him want to stare and catch another glimpse; and it would do no good; the mantilla had fallen. He remembered that Charlotte wore a hat under which he could easily see her face, her hair, the

turn of the nape of her neck—see that one disconcerting dimple which could come into her cheek and could stay away. The Spanish girl's face was almost hidden—had, all along, been almost hidden—behind a mantilla, and might have dimples and might not, might have smiles and might not, and held back from him any knowledge of wonders that might go with her beautiful voice.

He tried to look around at Charlotte, and he could not look away from the Spanish girl. But he knew, very suddenly, that Charlotte's lack of mystery—which might also be her lack of influence over his night thoughts—came from the fact that underneath her hat he could see all that there was of her face.

In the duskiness of the shop, the Spanish girl was growing clearer to his gaze, blooming with a soft and feminine grace. Manila—that was what she was: garden walls behind which bloomed jasmines and cloistered girls as sweet as the jasmines. He knew now that the whispers at night had meant the romance of a girl whose face was always partly hidden from him. The scent of a jasmine that he could not see but that he felt must be against this girl's pale cheek—why, this was what the night odours of flowers had been trying to tell him, blowing from over garden walls upon his heart that had not waked up! This was what the Ylang Ylang trees had telegraphed when their breath had blown out on the land breeze to meet the Transport. It had all meant Dolores. She was Manila's past, and Manila's future; she was all of Manila that he had been needing to know.

And in the meantime the stout little mother, with her assertive breathing, was by her simple indifference to the presence of these alien Americans, conveying to the air of the Cachos shop that for him her daughter, and Manila, would always be what he must not know. He felt that, as he looked at the daughter, the mother's calculating eyes were on him.

They left the shop. Vernay could never be sure that the girl had glanced at him; but the mother, seizing her arm and pushing her on in front, had said over her shoulder to the Cachos:

"See that you get a great price from that person at the Cuartel. It is due to the presence of these Americans that the price of commodities has gone up, and that we Spaniards are pinched in the pocket-books. Make her pay through the nose!"

She had hustled her daughter from the shop, the awning falling behind them with a definite slap.

He remained staring where the awning had fallen.

He felt Charlotte's hand on his arm. He looked where her face showed under her pretty hat.

"I am ready to go," she said.

"But—but—you hadn't finished buying your dress."

"I don't want it."

They too left the shop. But when they reached the banquetta, although he looked eagerly along the street in both directions, there was in sight no one besides the usual loafers who were bringing out their chairs and ranging them against the walls.

Vernay glanced at Charlotte. She was pale.

"Shall we . . . ? We have time for the Luneta."

Charlotte smiled brilliantly. "Oh, yes!" She hastened her steps which had been lagging. She kept up her brilliant smile.

Vernay felt, on the drive to the Luneta, that he was asleep in some corner of his brain. But the Luneta would wake him up so that he could respond to the light chatter that Charlotte was carrying on with determination but with numerous shy halts. She looked at him; she grew uneasy and stopped talking. For Vernay found it impossible to speak. Between him and his brain there had been thrown the heavy flower pattern of a black lace mantilla.

The sunshine—pleasant now at the end of the day—streamed over the ellipse from so low a point across the Bay that the shadow of the Legaspi Monument was painted grotesquely on the white pavement of the Bagumbayan where it whirls around the corner to the Malacon, and touched the feeble grass and deadened its green. The Constabulary Band was gaily playing their new gay American airs to please the crowds of khaki-clad soldiers and white-clad sailors; groups of American army and navy officers and their wives were talking in their carrying voices about dinners that night and card parties next day; the Mestizos were shrieking at each other as their carriages passed. Later on the Spaniards would be there, looking straight ahead with their white faces and resentful eyes. Vernay had heard that before the Occupation the Spaniards had been used to promenade around the ellipse while their vehicles waited at

the kerb; and he tried not to look at their averted faces as they drove by—around and around, never stopping—because he knew how they were feeling about it. Tragic, he thought them. Always dressed in black, the girls in soft stuffs, the fat mothers in stiff, hard silks that must scuttle when they walked on the high-arched small feet now resting lazily on the sills of the calesas. The ponies drawing their calesas felt the difference between their loads and the loads of those ponies belonging to natives; they did not scamper and kick and try to bite each other as they passed. Only the cocheros of these frozen loads showed a spirit of emulation; they were Filipinos, but they did not purpose allowing others of their race to get ahead of them who were driving real whites; they lashed their ponies and shouted unspeakable insults at the cocheros who drove rich natives and richer Mestizos. In the names of saints and devils and in-betweens, they told them to get behind with their shaded tans.

Vernay and Charlotte got out of their calesa and started walking slowly, with the crowd that walked slowly. He was silent, but Charlotte swayed her body in time to the dance music and seized his arm to sway him too.

“Wasn’t it heavenly last night?” she breathed in his ear.

He looked around at her: his eyes were not much above hers. “Haven’t you grown taller since you got out here?” he asked.

She seemed to be making up her mind about something. She looked away as she said: “You’re the—the one who is changing. I’ve noticed it.”

Vernay frowned. Those eyes which were so nearly on a level with his own looked sea-green in this light—the green that the sea was up North, blue-green, grey-green that flickered and could not blaze. Dark eyes could blaze; he thought that dark eyes could also turn into black velvet.

Charlotte was trying again. “Look here . . . There are all sorts of dangers out here—things you can’t quite put your finger on. No natural, homelike bogie-men—just things that get under the skin. *I* know! I’ve had my own times, fighting. I—I hope we don’t keep the hateful Islands! They—they’ll ruin—us.”

He began to look searchingly at the passing calesas.

“They don’t come on to the Luneta—the big Spanish families—until after ‘The Star-Spangled Banner,’” remarked Charlotte.

He wished that he could manage something besides staring at Charlotte.

“Didn’t you understand,” continued Charlotte, “that that was one of the big families? The Cachos told Mrs. Robins about her wanting to sell her jewels, the day we were at Clarke’s. The old lady looked like that because—well, because they all turn to comfort after they get fat.”

The band was being conducted through the most awful and screeching air—“All same Americano,” the natives were remarking with pride.

“*Está* ‘Waltz Me Around Again, Willic!’,” they yelled above the noise of the band. They clapped their hands and rolled their eyes at the soldiers for approval. But the soldiers pushed at the crowd with their swagger-sticks.

Charlotte's voice came again, an edge to it. "That Dolores will be immensely fat by the time she's thirty!"

Vernay seemed not to hear her. A note in one of the screeches of the band hit with sudden violence upon his ear-drums and was carried by an assaulted nerve straight to his brain. His teeth went on edge, his skin began to crawl as if at sight of some noisome elemental life. The note came again and again in the progress of the tune, with the same effect each time: until he became acutely conscious of it, but never accustomed to it. Until it formed a bruise where it hit on the same spot upon his ear-drums. Until he winced, and wanted to run beyond its reach, and wondered if he were going to lose his self-control and scream out. It was not, he realized, that it was a more offensive note than the other outrageous blares of the brasses; it was merely a single note that was supremely offensive to him.

With the silly scream held back, and penned up in his imagination where he screamed to his heart's content, he noticed—and he wondered dully—that every time the particular note was cast out on the air to hit on that nerve and ring its signal of alarm in his mind, he automatically glanced at the Wall. The sun was almost down and its rays were picking out the ancient Spanish saluting battery that overlooked the Luneta. Vernay rubbed his eyes. In that quiet light of early evening had it been his imagination that the Wall was leaning? Leaning, it seemed, toward the light-hearted crowd on the Luneta—striving to lean nearer yet. He did not feel that the leaning was in order to whisper some of those pleasant secrets of the tropic night that was

coming; the message that the Wall leaned nearer in order to convey to that lively crowd could be no pleasant thing. It would not be a warning of some unpleasant thing. It would be the thing itself. The Wall might be trying to fall upon the Americans.

Vernay put his hand under Charlotte's elbow and urged her off the Luneta.

"But why?" she asked, although she went with him.

She had noticed nothing unusual about the Wall: he could tell that. The screech of "Waltz Me Around Again, Willie!" pursued them as they drove rapidly into the Bagumbayan.

She questioned him all the way to the Calle Real, Ermita, to know why he had changed his mind about staying until the great families should drive on to the Luneta.

VIII

HE had been afraid in his lonely room the night that he had thought the Wall leaned over the Luneta. It kept coming back to him that the Wall had carved upon it the motto of a *very loyal city*. At peace from the note which had hurt his ear-drums, he had laughed at himself, had put out his light and crawled under the mosquito net, and—stopped laughing. The impression had been very clear. Perhaps, if notes could physically hurt him, they could work a change in inanimate substance? Vernay found that he was beginning to answer many of the queries which popped into his mind with two words: who knows?

Rolling over on his back and giving up the notion of sleep, he began to reason with himself. Was he again touched by the sun? But he knew that that was not so. And why had he been afraid to come into his room? Not afraid, exactly; just a feeling that in this old city it was rather lonely to be in an old room alone at night. . . . It came to this, then, that he had got a rather definite shock to his nerves. . . . He must see the medico in the morning. It was not natural, for a man who was young and healthy, to get a pain in his ears from a note in an ugly tune; and to have the pain in his ears travel through his head and hit the brain such a wallop that he had believed the Wall to be moving.

But if the Wall had moved would it be strange? That is, if he knew how it was possible? Would anything be strange if we knew *how* it was possible? Oh—damn! Why did the other men keep away from these fancies, and have nights of deep and perspiring sleep?

The breeze that was puffing in at the windows—and suspending its breathing—and coming back with a laugh in its throat—flapped the coarse lace ruffle which hung from the canopy of the four-poster. It rattled the wire rings on which the striped mosquito netting slid. Annoying. He tossed around the wide bed. The sheet came loose from where it had been tucked in underneath the straw petate which protected his body from the rattan; and he rolled the sheet into a ball and shied it at the foot of the bed. And then the petate heated up. How was it the people who lived out here fixed themselves? He collected the cylindrical hard Dutch-wife pillows, rolled them into his back, and tried shutting his eyes—tight. This would probably work.

Chow bugs got through the arabesques of the reja and knocked their stupid heads against the mosquito net and fell to the floor. They made distinct bumping sounds as they hit the bare floor. Ugh! Horrid things! Fat and fuzzy! No wonder the tao class of natives were so peculiarly low-down; they ate chow bugs. But then they ate locusts and grasshoppers; and an officer who had eaten some of them at a native baile up in Pampanga told him that they tasted like shrimps. Looked like shrimps, too, when they were fried; legs curled up.

Scratching behind the lattice. A barking up there where

the scratching was. Triumph seized him. He flourished one of the hard round pillows at the lattice. "*Hola! Señor Gheko!* You have nothing on me, now! I'm getting into the heart of the City!" He was but a step from the heart of the City; the Wall did not show most people that it could move.

The Wall had moved! He knew it, now that the night of wakefulness had knocked doubt from his mind. Stones had a life of their own; why shouldn't they move?

Walls! It was a city of walls, both real and shadowy. There were the garden walls. There was the wall which Charlotte was building up between them: she had put a stone on it when she had said, "She'll be fat at thirty." And there was the City Wall, which had been holding at bay for all these centuries more than the Americans could take in—not only the little brown brother whom everyone except the soldiers were so ready to take to their bosoms, but savagery, idolatry, and things that if one could see one would still deny the possibility of. The Wall had stood against that. Centuries of history hanging on to the seashore because civilization can never get further against the power of the silently creeping jungle that grows overnight. The men who had served out in the bosque had told him that you could *hear* the jungle growing at night. They said it would not be possible to run successful conduits; they would run the conduits, and soon they would see that Nature had been working on her own job—had run her own wires around the conduits, squeezing them to a slow death by suffocation, until their sides would crush from the pressure

and their boasted modernity would give way before primitive strength.

All this the Wall had known. It had stood against all this because it had willed to stand.

. . . But none of this explained how the Wall could have moved. What was it that that fellow Joshua had done to the walls of Jericho to make them crash? Blown a note on a trumpet. That was it! That was the reason the Wall had leaned over toward the Luneta: the jangling note of the tune the band was playing was the wrong note for the Wall. It had been an American note—and the Wall had been built to Spanish notes. That fellow Joshua had been on to something!

The room had turned cool, and the cool soothed him. So many chow bugs had at last beaten their heads off against the floor that they had given up the invasion. They were not the strongest part of the jungle. They could not overcome a room. . . . It was peaceful, now he had remembered about Joshua; and there were cool spots on the petate where he had not been lying. . . . And there was something beautiful coming into his head. It was something that had been lurking—crouched—behind his mind ever since he could remember. A dream. A dream that had come true. . . .

How stupid he had been! There was Paraiso, in the same calesa with the girl. Paraiso had talked of his sister, and had called her by name; but Paraiso had been a fact, and the girl of the mantilla had been a vision, and it had not occurred to him to link the two.

He had been haunting the Luneta. He had been prowling through the streets of the Intramuros, looking around each corner as he reached it with the same hope—that he would catch sight of two ladies who did not reach to his shoulder. He had been obliged to see her face. No face that he had ever gazed freely upon, in the past along Flirtation Walk and in the present of half-loverlike familiarity with Charlotte Carson, had meant so much to him. It might be a dreadful face; it might be merely a stupidly good face; but it was the face which he must see. The face which had stayed on the other side of the heavy flower pattern of a black lace mantilla had become inextricably associated with that part of Manila that had lived in his dreams by night and that had withdrawn into some corner which was out of sight during the days when he had thought that he wished to ask Charlotte to marry him. For he did not know how she looked; the glimpse that he had had of her face as her mantilla had fallen back had been a dim one at best; and in his effort to bring it clearly back he had smudged the image.

And then he had seen her—in broad daylight, on the street. The pure span of the Archbishop's Bridge was over their heads, and behind her as she walked toward him had been the bright gold of the sunset which was streaming over the Wall. But he was never to see her except in silhouette, he fretted: the light behind her, which was shining in his eyes, had made of her head a mere lovely outline. Behind her, fussing up closer and shooing her along, had come the stout mother with the jutting nose of arrogance. As Vernay had turned into this street and had seen her, the mother had

pushed past the girl and got between them; and then he had seen that bringing up the rear of the little procession there had been a formidable thin father with a fierce waxed moustache of the clear blue-white that blue-black hair turns to. The restless hand of the thin man had been fingering that place on his left hip where upon his ancestors a sword had probably hung—or where it had hung in his own youth—Vernay did not know. But it did not matter, except to add to the picture of this young girl with her eyes cast down, with her hand dragging at her mantilla until it again huddled too closely, with her face a blur of white and black and one touch of red—her lips.

He had dreamed about them; and he found that he was not ashamed of his dreams which, if inspired by a girl from home, he would have called slush. He made up the greatest adventures, in which he was marrying the girl; in which, as a preliminary to marrying her, he was breaking his way into their frowning old house with its forbidding double-doors on which hung two brass lion-head knockers. For he had followed them until they had turned into just such a pair of doors; and the old mother had looked over her shoulder at him and had hurried the girl along at a faster pace. In his adventuring by mind he convinced the fierce white moustache that his daughter could be happy with no man but this one American who could appreciate her exquisiteness. And all the time he did not know whether she were exquisite or not. He had never heard her speak, except her little indignant whisper to her mother in the shop of the creamy Cachos. He did not even know how she

looked when she would look straight into a man's eyes; she had never turned her head in his direction—although she must have recognized him as the man who had been in the Cacho shop.

Manila—white Manila—is a little town. And Vernay, living at the Club, was not many of the cramped blocks from the house where the girl lived with her fat mother and skinny father. Of necessity he would sometimes run across them. But she was never alone. And he would not have spoken to her if she had been. It did occur to him, however, that if she had been alone she would have lifted her eyes. He seemed to feel in the air as they passed each other that she would have looked at him if she had got the chance. But this conduct of hers had served one good purpose; he knew that her lashes were the longest and thickest and blackest that he had ever seen. Charlotte's lashes were long, but they were like her hair, so that the cool grey of her eyes showed through their golden gauze. Charlotte's lids were thin, and traversed by tiny blue veins; when they drooped—which was seldom, as she was given to directness of gaze—they showed the shape of the eyeball beneath, moulding themselves around it, clinging to it. Fine: yes. But Dolores' lids were so heavy that if it had not been for the density of her hair and the thickness and blackness of her lashes he would not have known that to look into her eyes was what he must do because those eyes were the darkest in the world and the softest . . . The blurred image of her face line had become again a clear, sharp photograph.

He had been at his tailors' one afternoon when she came

in with the formidable father. At sight of the American the fierce moustache worked up and down on a lip trembling with resentment. Beneath the moustache were long teeth which had once been, undoubtedly, white and cruel but which now were stained with nicotine and were about to fall from shrivelled gums. Vernay stood aside for the old man to swear fluently at the Dos Hermanos; and he looked at the shape of the old man's face. It was long and pointed, like Velasquez' portraits. Different from the men in the fondas. The men in the fondas had faces built on a square, with the lower section of equal importance with the brow and eyes; a square that gave room for rudely modelled mouths and strongly animal chins, and for noses which were short and bold: the faces from Barcelona—sea-faring faces, and the faces of tradesmen. This old man who was cursing the cringing tailors had a nose which was long and thin and rapacious. The good humour of the fondas was lacking here.

"I will return and see about the ordering of the linen suits when your shop is free of intruders," the old man had stated, in a voice deep from his skinny neck.

The fattish Dos Hermanos were bending almost double in front of him. "*Si, Don Sebastian—bien está!*" they were saying as they rubbed their nervous hands together. "Whenever you like, Don Sebastian! We understand perfectly, Don Sebastian!"

And Don Sebastian had then taken his daughter firmly by the elbow and pushed her out of the shop. She had not

looked up from her contemplation of the dusty floor; but she had been all the while edging, step by step, from behind her father until she had been quite a yard nearer Vernay. She had come close enough for him to look for the jasmine in her hair.

But why had the mother and daughter to sell their jewels when the father could order linen suits from the most expensive tailors in Manila?

The Dos Hermanos were staring after the Spaniards. In their rather slanted eyes was a coldness that they had not shown when rubbing their hands together.

"Oh, very terrible people!" they informed Vernay. "Don Sebastian and Doña Adelina—always the foot on the neck of the Filipinos!"

"But the daughter—she seems——"

The Dos Hermanos, with their perfect team-work, shrugged as with one shoulder. "She iss a pure Spaniard, *Señor Teniente!*" These little pale-brown men spoke in unison, probably thought in unison. They were the Dos Hermanos; possibly they were twins.

Vernay had been rather enraged by the insolence of Don Sebastian. Over the mother's equal insolence in the Cacho shop there had hung the veil of the mysterious darkness, and of her sex; but he wanted to squeeze that skinny throat out of which had come slurs on the Americans. This desire to wring the neck of Dolores' father had deadened his scruples; he would like to get ahead of this domineering Spaniard. He would manage, in some way, to meet the

girl from the thought of meeting whom—in a clandestine fashion—he had been shrinking.

“Don Sebastian,” the Dos Hermanos were saying as with one voice, “he thinks that, because his family are still living in the old house which they built before whites lived beyond the Wall, he is still the *Conquistador*! But no! Times, *Señor Teniente*, have changed! They will take gladly the *dinero* of the Filipinos for their hemp lands and their sugar *haciendas*. They wish—all of the so-grand Spaniards—to sell out and return to Spain, where they can again talk with their friends who were so fortunate as to flee from the Islands in 1898; and they will have to acknowledge to these so-grand friends that the Filipinos are now rich and getting richer. “These dogs of Filipinos!” the Dos Hermanos gritted their big white teeth together—“killed their son, the *Capitán*, in 1896! He was very good—oh, very good, the *Capitán*; but he fought *General* Aguinaldo; and he got killed. That *General* Aguinaldo, he could kill even Spaniards!”

“Here—” interrupted Vernay—“don’t make those collars with the hooks out of sight again! Do you want to choke me?”

“Oh, no, Mother of God, no! We ourselves are *mucho amigo* with the *Americanos*! Do not think, *Señor Teniente*, that *we* are Katipunan!” They rolled their black eyes which had no depth—their Malay eyes—and asserted that they themselves had a horror of the Katipunan. “The Katipunan iss very bad! We had a friend who was Katipunan, and we spat on him when we met him in the street. *General*

Aguinaldo, he iss down with—what you call it?—both feet on the Katipunan. *General* Aguinaldo iss *mucho amigo* too!"

"*Spero!*" ordered Vernay. "What about these old families being so poor that they have to sell off their jewels?"

"Oh, that iss because, while they wait for a sale of their *haciendas*, they have to live! And living iss very dear, now that the so-reech *Americanos* have come in with their streams of *pesos*! That iss good and proper, as the *señor* doubtless himself sees very clearly. For whose friends are the *Americanos*? We—the *Dos Hermanos*—we make good business on the *Americanos*, who need many khaki and duck uniforms to be made by the so-good tailors that we are. We would see the Katipunan cooking in hell-fire without raising a hand to help them—by the Holy Mother of God!" The *Dos Hermanos* were quite breathless, and very loyal, and looked to the *Teniente* for applause.

The *Teniente* looked at them with some scorn, and drew off from their moist hands as they fitted him. He wanted to bring them back to the subject of Dolores' family, and it could not be done without direct questioning.

He had had to go on through days of fleeting glimpses of the girl, and days of no glimpses at all. And here of a sudden was their calesa coming slowly on to the Luneta, with a stout lady and thin man on the back seat, and with a girl on that small seat which can be drawn from the bowels of a calesa; and with, wedged between the stout lady and thin man, his friend Paraiso!

Between the oncoming calesas of the Spanish, and the departing victorias of the Americans, there had resulted a

confusion of traffic. For a few minutes the Ayala calesa was held up at the kerb near where Vernay was walking. Doña Adelina's husky matter carried above the noises of the Luneta.

She was saying: "Would anyone but Yankee pigs have abolished our old custom of having all vehicles except the carriages of the Archbishop and the Governor General drive in the same direction?"

From his stand behind the calesa Vernay saw that Doña Adelina was tightly encased in the stiff black silk of the Spanish-Manila lady when on dress parade; it was evident that she was jammed into a high-bust corset. Her foot, which hung over the low sill, was no longer "gone native" but was wedged into a short-vamped slipper. The old gentleman's white linen crackled with rice starch, the brim of his wide panama moved up and down with the breeze—obscuring his keen eyes—flapping back. The ends of the moustache flapped in rhythm with the brim of the panama, until it was a wonder its waxing did not crack. So old, to have had this young daughter! But he had seen this before, on the Luneta—cold and saddened fathers, high-tempered fat mothers—and out of them those little señoritas! The flesh on the neck of the old gentleman, beneath the cream-white of his panama and the blue-white of his hair, was tobacco brown; but you could tell that it had once been white; it lacked the clearness of the browns and yellows and in-betweens who thronged the Luneta. It was laid on his neck, this tobacco skin, in dried folds like the leaf itself.

The traffic thinned, and the Ayala calesa moved on with dignity; the shirt-tails of the cocheró, hanging down over his box-seat, had dignity. . . . The hot sea-breeze had died down and a blanket of stifling heat, falling, settling, had brought a deadness into the air. It was the menopause of the day, and you had an oppression of the chest accompanied by a fear that you might never again breathe freely. You knew all the time that in half an hour the cool breeze from the land would sweep into this vacuum; but you never lost that sense of a strangling fear. A few minutes before, at retreat, the flag had felt it; it had come down languidly from its pole on top of Fort Santiago where it juts out over the Wall, and had collapsed lifelessly into the arms of the soldiers who had stood on the ramparts to gather it up and fold it away for the night.

Vernay, walking many times around the ellipse, continued to see the Ayala calesa. He passed it, he was overtaken by it, and each time he knew before he saw it that it was nearing him. For, the second before he would come in sight of it—or, looking over his shoulder at just the right time, would see that it was creeping up on him—a quiver would run along his spine, shaking him with cold, getting into his brain. The quiver so numbed his wits that it was only after several turns around the two bandstands that he thought to reverse his steps and come face to face with the calesa, so that Paraiso—his friend—should recognize him. For he had caught the full gaze of Dolores' hidden eyes. Those large eyes were as heavy and black as the lace of her mantilla,

and in their smolder Vernay saw the smoldering of Spain as she went out.

But, when he had seen Paraiso face to face, Paraiso had been fast asleep. His head nodded against his father's bony shoulder.

I

CHARLOTTE had had to move from the boarding house on Calle Real, Ermita; it was too far from her school. The new street cars did not run directly to the district in which the school was located, nor did her salary permit a calesa back and forth. She could not afford a carromata, even if she had been willing to have natives picked up along the way until it should be so crowded as to warrant the driver coming in and sitting on her lap. Besides, she could no longer stand the breakfasts served by the Mestiza who ran the place. She had got to the point where a mouthful of coarse greyish bread, a whiff of tepid eggs pasado por agua, at once subdued her appetite. She had had to fall back on chocolate. To be sure, the chocolate too was tepid; but she liked its vanilla flavouring and she liked to watch the cook-boy make it. He had blue-enamelled chocolate pots with wooden pestles sticking through a hole in the center of the lid, and the small round cakes of hand-ground chocolate which he bought in the native markets, dropped into the pot and pounded with the pestle into a thick drink, tasted as she had always imagined the bean would taste when fresh. She had put up with the nasty bread on account of the chocolate.

And she had liked the garden which ran around the front and side of the house. She had never before seen a garden without an arrangement of paths and flower-beds, and with

no sod. It was one expanse of hard-packed earth which in the dry season cracked open. No one paid the least attention to the garden except the muchachos. They squatted on their heels and poked around the flower roots with sharpened sticks, and brought water in empty tomato cans and made a mess of mud around each root; and by brooding, and squatting there silently by the hour—their sloe eyes half shut—they did actually seem to charm the poor things into making one more effort—like a woman in childbirth. There was a bush of papery, pale-blue flowers in one corner; and the muchachos appeared to bow down and worship that bush.

“Like the skies!” they told Charlotte.

They had framed the blue bush with a border of some flatly growing grass whose spiky leaves were shades of pink and red; and to pen in the mud they had put stones around the outside of the pink border. They whitewashed the stones. It was a shrine, and the muchachos might have been poorly made bronze Buddhas sitting around it on their haunches and staring in meditation. The muchachos did not think much of the lilies; Amaryllis of blood colour, and of a lovely pink—and sweet-smelling white spider lilies on their high stalks. For the hedges of the saints—the crotons which they called San Francisco, and other saints’ names tacked on to variations in the colour of the splotches on the leaves—they professed scorn. They were, oh, very common, and would even grow at once if you stuck a branch into the dry ground. They did not need the dykes of mud which were constantly replenished from the tomato cans; they were common. But the hedge which ran around the garden, and

which bloomed with the light-hearted abandon of the hibiscus in a hot land—that was bueno, because it was good for girls to wear behind their ears when they went to bailes; and the pink variety was better than the red—being mucho bueno against tea-coloured cheeks, Charlotte supposed.

Filipinos, then, had no love for nature, which was “common”: they only admired the growths foreign to their Islands and registering disapproval of those Islands by trying their best to die.

She used to sit with her sewing on the square portico which was built out over the main door that in the plain casa is at the side of the house. Every Saturday she sat there sewing, mending and wailing over the necessity for the mending. ‘Clothes came back from the wash looking as if the thin materials had been chewed, and she could never make out, from what the lavanderas jabbered at her protests, whether they had really been chewed by rats, or experimented with by cockroaches, or had simply been beaten to death by the stones with which the lavanderas mashed out the dirt that the river tubs put into them.

Sometimes she hired a native seamstress to help her; and then she had to stay in her close room, the Venetian blinds drawn against the sun, and amuse herself with what she could understand of the gossip the Filipina let stream from her mouth. The neat little Filipina sat on the floor, grinding the hand-wheel of a Singer sewing machine. A Singer, the cover of the machine said it was; but the machines were sold in the chino shops, and the chinos had possibly stolen their vitals and replaced them with junk.

Charlotte had had a Singer at home; and she could not tell head from tail of this humming monstrosity flat down on the floor. The sewing "girl" was usually so old that her face, sunken in the immaculate folds of her pañuella, was as hard and dry and brown as a coco-nut. Her head, with its bone formation and its twist of faded hair, suggested a coco-nut shell. She carried a wooden comb thrust into the knob of hair, and if a vagrant breath of air stirred the smooth, oiled coiffure the humming of the Singer would cease, the work would fall, and she would take out the comb and rearrange her hair. She ground the little wheel slowly around, all day and every day, in some house of white Manila.

On the balustrade of the portico were plants in majolica pots, or in the more precious pots brought from China—panelled jars of glazed blue or green pottery, with flower subjects in the narrow panels and figures and scenery in the larger. Gorgeous things, and so tempered by lack of care that their dimmed splendour aided and abetted the languishing of the plants. For the choicest of the plants were in these pots. One or two rose bushes, cramped and discouraged in everything save perfume, from the heart of their little alien blooms did their best; and they were sweeter, as they were smaller, than roses at home. Pinks: and they smelt not at all. A concourse of holy names . . . large leaved begonias . . . Heart of Jesus, Heart of Mary, Heart of Joseph . . . pink leaves, pink leaves veined in wide bands of white, green leaves speckled like a kaleidoscope with pink and white and red. Charlotte helped the muchachos take care of these potted plants. She was afraid to work down

in the garden; she could not get used to the queer bugs one turned up from the earth. She had dug into a nest of them, late one afternoon as the rapid tropical twilight was doing its sprint across the skies; and she had been sure that the large-headed bugs had looked at her with intelligence in their eyes.

On the portico, pushed away into a corner behind a broken-down wicker chair, there was an empty pot—the eight-sided Chinese sort. The pot stayed empty for as long as Charlotte lived in the house. She wanted that pot. She would sit there, peeping around the broken-down chair at it, and wanting it. Hot! It would be so hot that Charlotte would mechanically pull her blouse as far out from her body as it would stretch, trying to let in more air—fanning down her chest while she held the blouse out; and never getting her mind off the pot. Several times she had tried to buy it from the Mestiza, and each time the Mestiza depreciated it as too poor a thing for a so-rich American. Smiling ingratiatingly, the Mestiza would call her a slurred name that Charlotte knew was argot and that she could not understand, and would return to her duty of boxing the ears of the muchachos. She had a heavy hand with those barefooted boys.

Charlotte discovered, in this house, that only Americans put the “boys” into shoes, and into tight-collared white coats; these boys wore the *camisa de chino*, with neck cut round and shirt-tails out. Comfortable. But Charlotte did not approve of the bare feet, which she felt certain must keep down their self-respect. She thought that the naked legs

of the native women, thrust as they were into either embossed leather Tagalog chinelas or into gaudier and commoner chinelas of yellow or green or red plush, would disappear with the growth of American schooling. And she shrank from the healthiness of no clothes at all until adolescence. The Spaniards, she told herself, had with malice left these poor people in ignorance of the evil of nakedness.

She had had a dreadful experience, going to call on the family of one of her pupils. They lived out where the nipa shacks began; and when she had got out of her calesa and had walked into the bare yard over which the shack perched, she had feared that she would faint. She had had to call up all of her college stiffening to get her through. For the mother and older sister were washing their long and luxuriant hair in the yard—gallons of suds from the Go Go bark in buckets at their feet—and also in the yard and close beside them so that their laughing chatter should be uninterrupted, the two men of the family stark naked except for white loin cloths, and pouring over their heads water from other buckets. The naked men had joined in the women's wordy welcome to her; but she had been shaken, and had had much ado to climb up the bamboo ladder into the house. The women, their dripping hair still hanging down their backs, had escorted her to her calesa when, after an uncomfortable quarter of an hour, she had taken her leave; they had followed the calesa, shouting encouragement to her to come again, and calling to the two men—who were now drying off in the sun—to back up their invitation. The Spaniards, she told herself, were to blame for this. . . . But she carried

off an impression that the Filipino family had been laughing at her. She was not sure, in the time to come, that that visit had not started what she knew was her unpopularity with her pupils' families. They were polite; but always the laugh was underneath.

The muchachos in the boarding house liked her; she knew they did. Probably because she and the Mestiza were not friendly. The Mestiza, a soft waddling woman, was effusively friendly when she spoke English. Charlotte did not know what she was when she dropped into Tagalog, which she did after every burst of extra cordiality. The other teachers in the house told Charlotte that the Mestizos were always that way; a mixture did not pay, they said. The Chino-mestizos were the best; but they kept their children away from the schools. These other teachers knew: they had come out on the *Thomas* in 1901. They never stopped telling her how much they knew that she did not.

Charlotte was sitting on the portico, resting. Her head ached. The sewing "girl" had arrived at the correct stage for pressing the results of her labours on Charlotte's new dresses, and had brought her own iron with her; also the charcoal for the stoking of this blunt-nosed engine. The room, with the blinds down and the heat penned inside, had got filled with charcoal fumes. Charlotte sat on the portico, therefore, and held her head in her hands and thought about how she would like to be cold—really cold, so that she would rush out and spend all her savings on a fur coat. It made her sick to think of a fur coat; it was only that she wished desperately, for a minute, that she were where fur coats were

necessary. And then she remembered that she was out here to do a good work for these poor little natives who had been left in ignorance by the Spaniards and who did not even know that it was not nice to be naked except for white loin cloths. She said something to this effect to the other teacher who was resting on the portico.

"*Them* naked?" screamed the other teacher. "Gord! I don't mind what they do about *themselves*! It's just when they start snoopin' around to catch us in our *baños* that I get up on my hind legs and howl!"

This was so horrifying a thought that Charlotte could do no more than gasp to know what she meant.

"Yeah," said the other teacher, "I mean just *that*! I got my lesson when I first got out here—about why the Spaniards beat 'em up so. And believe me, the Spaniards knew what they were about!"

This was in line with Tom Vernay's ideas, which always antagonized her.

"I was livin' further down Real here, and there was a *muchacho* workin' in the house named Angel—which, if you pronounce it Spanish suited him better than what we'd call it in English. Well, this Angel was awful polite—damn polite! He'd bring me little screwed-up bunches of flowers from his home. He was forever hangin' around to see if he couldn't do something kind for the 'ticher.' And one day I was in takin' my *baño*; and I'd soaped up and pulled the string to let the water out of the oil can, in the bathroom that we teachers had rigged up in the back of the house—I never noticed that the *Mestizas* that ran the house ever

used it; they liked the back yard better—and I got a feelin' that something was looking. You know that feelin'? Sorter crawlin'. And I looked up, and there, sure enough, was an eye at the ventilating slats at the top of the door! I knew Angel's fishy eye, all right! Well—I went spin-nacher all of a sudden. I grabbed my kimono—I forgot my bedroom slippers, I was in such a hurry to teach that fellow a lesson—and I slammed out of that bathroom on a run . . . right after Angel, down the middle of Real! I caught him once or twice and gave him some good lamms over the head; but I got to feelin' the hot road on my feet and had to give it up. But I bet Angel didn't stop runnin' till next day! Last I saw of him, he was sprintin'. . . ."

"Oh! . . ." was all that Charlotte could manage.

"I'd have hurt him lots more—I'd have *really* hurt him—" brooded the other teacher—"if I hadn't had to grab at my kimono all the time I was runnin'."

Charlotte's head ached worse than ever. She called to her favorite muchacho:

"Mariano! Will you get me a glass of water?"

Mariano was just behind them. He went softly off on his bare feet, and softly came back and leaned down to hand a little tray to Charlotte. He was polite.

The next morning Charlotte found, in the sala into which all the rooms of the house opened, a bouquet of the flaunting marigolds of the native gardens; thrown down and already faded. Mariano had been accustomed to bring her a bouquet for her desk at school; his little brother and three small sisters were among her pupils. She ran back into her

room and put the poor things into water; they would not have survived a trip through the hot city to the school. When she came home that afternoon she met Mariano in the sala.

"What happened to my poor little flowers, Mariano?" she asked regretfully,

Mariano looked at her with impudence. "I t'row dem away," he smirked. "Flowers no good for ticher."

Charlotte had been glad, when she finally decided to move, because Mariano had become insolent in his manner. He had taken to looking at her. She could not decide what was behind the film that he could throw over his eyes. But always, when she glanced up, he was looking at her; and always the film was over his eyes. It made her nervous; she could not help thinking of what the other teacher had told her.

She found a better place in the Walled City. A large room, in a large house that had once been owned by a "great family." The great family had gone back to Spain, fleeing before Dewey sailed into the Bay; the Eurasian who ran the house told Charlotte that they had gone in such a hurry—on the *Esmeralda* for Hongkong—that they had left the house just as it was. How the Eurasian came into possession Charlotte never knew; but she ran a good home for a number of teachers, and Charlotte had a nice room, and the furniture was lovely. She did not worry over the squatter rights of the Eurasian, which had only infringed upon Spanish rights.

She had a great carved four-post bedstead; her dressing-

table was a console whose curved legs of Narra upheld a stained marble slab. Stretching across one wall was a tianguí which was inlaid with ivory flowers. To be sure, she could be comfortable in none of the many chairs; for if they were straight chairs they were of the same carved Narra as the console, and had the most unyielding of rattan seats that matched the bed which would not give to your tired body no matter how hard you bounced up and down; and if they were rockers they were like the rockers which were ranged in two stiff rows down the middle of the caida into which all of the teachers' rooms opened—back to back, and each decorated with an antimacassar. But the house was cool with its thick walls of old stucco-treated stone; and it had a garden. The muchacho who had charge of cleaning the rooms was named Nicomedis. It was charming to see how dexterously Nicomedis polished the floors; he skated over them, poised on a banana leaf, and grinning all the time as if it were a game.

Nicomedis lived on the ground floor of the house in a cell-like, air-tight cubby-hole next to the quarters for the calesa and pony which the Spanish family had kept. The first night she slept in her new quarters she ran wildly down the great staircase shrieking for Nicomedis. The ceiling of her room, which she had believed to be wood like the blue walls, had moved—unmistakably moved. It had waved, a waving motion that had started in one corner and had gone across the entire ceiling. She had held up her candlestick and had looked at the ceiling, in order to be sure that she was really seeing a waving motion of the

solid wood. She was not at all frightened until she heard, up there where the ceiling was moving, an outburst of squeaks. The noise could be nothing on earth but rats. Civilized, homelike rats, that she feared above all the threats of the Old Testament! It was then that she had run out and screamed for Nicomedis.

Nicomedis had had, at one time in his life, a devastating attack of smallpox. Through his scars he cocked an eye up at the ceiling. It was still in motion, like a blue ocean under a ground swell, an ocean turned upside down in a nightmare.

"Oh, yees," he said calmly, and turning to go; "it iss the house snake after the rats. Be easy. He will catch them."

"But how—" she said wildly—"how can that make the ceiling move?"

Oh, the ceiling was of cloth so that the señorita would be cool and happy. "Be easy," said Nicomedis again. "Mr. House Snake, he *buscar* the rats! He eat them!"

She took to bed with her, that night, a dreadful resentment against Tom Vernay. He had so raved to her about this old Walled City! This disgusting Walled City!

II

MAY: and they could look for the rains to start the next month.

Charlotte was dressing for dinner. She was going to dine with her mother's old school friend, Mrs. Robins. Mrs. Robins was condescendingly good to her. She stood on the balcony which opened from her bedroom and held a wash-stand; she was giving her face its last dash of cold water before powdering. At first she had wasted much time peeping down through the sliding shutters at the street, and wondering if it were really true, as the Eurasian said, that no one could look up and see her; but she had got used to many things. She splashed her face, and went back to her console and sifted white powder over it. She thought that the white powder made her too pale, and that rouge on top of it was too startling; but the beauty shops along the Escolta carried no tinted powders. There was no demand for it, the bedizened sales girls told her—Spanish ladies always called for a dead white.

But who wanted to look like Spanish women, with beaucatcher curls plastered down on their cheeks—plastered down by spitting on their fingers and sticking them into place, she had no doubt—the dirty things! High-bust corsets, too! Naturally, they looked well at the Spanish Baile, Carnival week; who would not, with those mantons de Manila, those skirts that were so full and so held out with

petticoats that they made a weaving motion around the high-heeled slippers—which the Escolta shops ordered from Madrid especially for this ball and would sell to no one but Spaniards? Tom Vernay had gasped. . . . She had heard his indrawn breath. . . . It had made her supremely angry—the ruling that one who was not of pure Spanish blood must stay off the dancing floor on the night of this baile!

She put out her hand to the last candlestick so that the room should be in darkness while she was out. She did not like to have a massed battalion of bugs of all sizes and degrees of ferocity fly at her head when she came back. She lifted her foot for the step which should bring her to the last candlestick—near the door—and she thought she saw something crawling. . . . Another one of those damned centipedes! It occurred to her that she was becoming remarkably addicted to swearing, this beginning of her third year out; but then, she also reflected, as she methodically stuck her bolo paper-cutter through the centipede, everyone said that you went crazy by the end of the second year. Mrs. Jennings put the limit of sanity at the end of the first year out. . . . She looked down at the centipede: it had not stopped wriggling. It would never do to cut it in two, for then you would have two centipedes to reckon with; she would have to stand here in this silly attitude, hanging over the thing until it stopped kicking. It kicked remarkably. Well, why not? It had enough legs. . . . She began to laugh aloud. . . . She was growing hysterical, and she refused herself that luxury. But she must have screamed, for

in rushed the teacher who had been with her out Real way—the one who had chased the Filipino.

“Say!” said this girl, Ellen. “If you go all to pieces like this, when you haven’t been out here as long as I have by three years, you’d better buy your ticket home! No use for *you* to hang around for a husband!”

Charlotte forgot about the centipede; she said:

“I did *not* come out here to hunt a husband!”

“Don’t get hot in the collar,” said Ellen pleasantly. “It’ll make all that powder go to ruin; and you know it costs *mucho*. Have you got a fan to take with you? Here: take this one. I was just on my way in to lend it to you. My beau brought it to me, his last trip back from Frisco. Pretty; ain’t it?”

Charlotte, as au revoir to her room, patted with love an eight-sided Chinese pot which was enthroned in the middle of the tiangui. Ellen Halsey had moved over here when Charlotte had moved. She had known perfectly well that Charlotte had stolen that flower pot and she had kept her mouth shut. What she did not know was that this was the first time Charlotte had ever even wanted to steal. The effect of the climate. It was bad on one’s morals. Charlotte had intended planting in the pot a palm of the right size; it would be easy to get a baby palm. She had spoken of the matter to Nicomedis. She had told him that she must have a palm as soon as he could get off on Sunday and dig one up for her, somewhere—she had waved her hand vaguely—anywhere where palms came up baby size. But

Nicomedis had told her, firmly, that palms were common. So the pot stood empty, on a sideboard-like tiangui where it should not have been.

This was not the only mistake she had made in the matter of the decoration of a room: around the lattice where the house snake's province began and hers ended, she had hung a collection of Oriental shoes. The chino cook—they had a chino to cook real American food for them, at this old house which had, by some crookedness, been confiscated—the Chino cook, then, had come to her room on an errand about the sandwiches that she carried to school for lunch; and he had looked around. When he had seen the shoes hanging from the bottom of the lattice frieze he had laughed, a high neighing laugh.

"Missee puttee top-side China shoes. China man no puttee top-side Melican shoes." He had folded his hands complacently.

"Well, I didn't ask your opinion!" she had almost shouted.

She had left the shoes on the wall. She was going to take them home when her second term of service in the schools was over.

Of late, she wondered why it was so long to the end of a term of service.

The Robins's dinner was small, only the Jennings couple, Mr. Cootz and herself; so Mrs. Robins was using a small table-top. All the army ladies had these assorted table-tops; they were made for them by the Quartermaster Department, of rough pine, as they were always covered by sleazy Canton-linen cloths. The roughly finished wood had

been shipped from Oregon to the Philippines to be used in building bungalows at posts down in the Provinces; and each of the General Officers' wives had reasoned that a little of it could well be diverted for her convenience; and then the Colonels' wives had seen no reason why they should not have as good things as the Generals' wives had; and next, the field officers' wives had asked for them; and the Quarter-master had desperately decided to get ahead of the game by making them for the company officers' wives as well. Charlotte had heard him say that he was wondering when the run on table-tops for non-coms' wives would start.

Charlotte knew why the guests had been kept down to officers of Tom Vernay's company, and why she had been included: they wanted to "pump" her. They would not succeed in "pumping" her: she had been dodging the School Board!

"It's too bad we couldn't get Mr. Vernay," it started—Mrs. Robins speaking. "But he just doesn't seem to care to mix with Service people any more! We wanted him for you, Charlotte dear; all of us had noticed, of course. . . ."

Charlotte smiled at her—straight in the eye. She said: "Oh, you made a mistake, dear Mrs. Robins, to hold me out as a bait."

"Oh, but, my dear, that's your modesty," simpered Mrs. Robins. The simper did not reach her eyes. "We all know *why* Mr. Vernay goes up on top of the Wall every afternoon! I've seen him myself, coming down the Ramp there by the Dominican Monastery; and such a look on his face!

I'd like to have put that look on a young man's face! Now, don't deny that that is the time when you get home from your school, because we know just what time you do get home. I don't mean to say that I've been spying; but I do like a love affair! So pretty for a trysting place, too—the top of the Wall just there where it has that little park. I went up one day after I'd passed Mr. Vernay coming down. He looked so happy that I wanted to see what *made* him so happy, you see. I take an interest in all the youngsters in the Colonel's regiment. Well, there wasn't a soul up there—I'd fully expected to find you, my dear, and I was going to bring you home in the Dougherty; but there wasn't a soul up there. There was just a place on the grass, under a *Cadena de Amor* vine, where it looked mashed down. . . . It was an awful climb up that Ramp! The steps are far too enormous for a woman's reach——”

“The Ramp was built for the stride of a man,” interposed the Colonel, laughing at his wife. Charlotte could not make out just what was the Colonel's attitude in this matter of the top of the Wall.

“I felt that it was my duty,” said his wife with virtue. “If Charlotte had been there, I meant to bring her home in the Dougherty. She would have been feeling very tired from her long day in school with those snivelling native children. And I wanted to have a good talk with her. I wanted to tell her—as I am telling her now—that she *ought not* to fatigue herself by going up to that secluded spot every afternoon. Besides, while I was up there monks were looking out of their windows, staring at me with the

greatest curiosity! Charlotte has no way of knowing what those monks will say about her around town!" She was getting censorious.

Charlotte laughed lightly. "Those are cloistered monks! They won't have a chance to talk about me!"

"Ah—" Mrs. Robins caught her up—"Then you acknowledge that you had been up there?"

Charlotte was glad that Ellen had lent her the fan. It was of long, curling feathers, and when she fanned it hid her face for a second at a time and gave her a chance to get her mouth and eyes in order. The muchacho was putting a risole in front of her, and she began eating it steadily. She must have time to think. If she told them the truth—that she had never been up the Ramp—that if it had not been for what Tom Vernay had confided to her, she would not have known that the Ramp led to a hanging garden—they would turn their investigations on Tom Vernay alone. It would help him if she continued to get half their attention. She laughed, therefore; she was working up a very good laugh these days—on tap when she needed it. That much Tom Vernay had taught her. If it had not been for Tom Vernay her laugh would still be what it had been when she came out, an outburst of teasing joy in life. . . . She finished her risole, and looked at Mrs. Robins with bland eyes.

"I want to know everything that there is to Manila before I go home," she said pleasantly.

"There's a good deal to Manila that I should *not* want a daughter of *mine* to know!" Mrs. Robins told her. Mrs. Robins never chatted: she told people things.

Charlotte hoped Mrs. Robins believed that her silence came from an inward digesting of those things.

"—Trouble with him is," Captain Jennings was saying, "that he's softening up!"

"Ah!" Mrs. Robins breathed, triumphant.

"I can't understand it about that youngster," Captain Jennings went on, addressing his remarks to the Colonel who was frowning into his plate. "He started in with lots of promise. Not nearly so fresh as most of 'em when they first graduate; not so fresh as *I* was. Got on with the men. Didn't he, Cootz?"

"Yes, sir!" said Cootz. When Charlotte was happy it amused her that Cootz never spoke unless to back up his Captain.

"Well, now he's pulling off. Pulling off, I tell you! We're too rough for him! I've seen it coming on." Captain Jennings was still looking at the Colonel.

There was a spasm in Charlotte's throat. If this was what serving in the tropics did for men, then she would rather a man in whom she had an interest did pull off.

Mrs. Jennings had not spoken. Now she said, with a deprecating glance at Charlotte: "I don't see why you all are down on him! Why shouldn't he fall in love! Why shouldn't he marry if he wants to?"

"That's just it!" boomed Mrs. Robins. She had a flat chest but she could boom. "Why doesn't he come right out and say that he means to get married and tell us who the girl is?" She stared accusingly at Charlotte. "The *natural* thing for him to do would be to come at once to me, when he

is sure that he wants to marry the girl—whoever she is, who meets him on top of the Wall in that disreputable way—and tell me all about it. I am the proper one for him to come to.”

Hard lines—Charlotte said to herself—to have been invited here just to sit and hear them calling her disreputable: she who had never been asked to go on top of the Wall. She would have gone if Vernay had asked her; this she acknowledged to herself with great bitterness.

“Men are pretty good as they are,” supplemented Jennings. “What’s the use of his wanting them changed into mollicoddles? Pretty good works of God they are—the rough men that those Washington ladies in pants meddle with. Maybe they do drink, and gamble, and swear in a way that would make thin blood run cold! But when it comes to a tight place, give me the help of those rough ’uns!”

“Do you mean to tell me that he’s interfering with your management of your company?” the Colonel shouted.

Captain Jennings, in the most irritating way, began to roll a cigarette from his little bag of Bull Durham. Before replying to the Colonel he stuck the finished cigarette into his mouth, inhaled deeply, let the smoke out of his large nose, and enjoyed himself. A North Carolina tobacco factory transplanted to Manila: that was all he was! And this poor thing was getting ready to kill Tom Vernay with his Colonel! . . . Charlotte held her breath.

“Oh, no!” Captain Jennings said fairly. “Not a bit that! I’d be glad if he took enough interest to interfere. What he

does is to just go through his duties with his head in the clouds. No snap! Mooning around!"

"Oh, well, then——" The Colonel sat back in his chair, relaxed.

"You never see him around the Club, although, living right there, it would be natural if he came around where we're hobnobbing," continued Jennings, who never dropped a subject.

"He *isn't* sociable," Mrs. Jennings contributed.

"If you mean by that, my dear, that he doesn't hang around the *married* women, I don't know but what that's the only thing in his favor we've heard his evening!" Mrs. Robins smiled at Mrs. Jennings in the friendliest way in the world.

"If you would let me speak——" said the Colonel, who had not been trying to speak. "I want to say that the whole trouble lies in the fact that this regiment is stationed in Manila. If we were out in the *bosque*, these youngsters——"

"Now, Colonel," remarked his wife, "you know very well that you have served your turn in the *bosque*."

"It didn't hurt me!" said the Colonel. ". . . If we were out in the *bosque*, these youngsters——"

"Well, it hurt me—those nasty little pigstys in the Southern Islands! I want to tell you right now, Colonel, that if you think I'll go to any more of them——"

The Colonel, who had waited, said:

". . . If we were out in the *bosque*, these youngsters

would have something more to do than thinking about girls. They'd get some guts knocked into 'em! Where I got the nonsense kicked out of me was on the frontier. Yes, Madam, on the frontier, where you were too good to follow me! The plains!" He glared around the table, his reddened little eyes like a wild pig's eyes. "Humph!" he snorted, picking up his glass of Scotch and Tan San, and gurgling as it ran down his throat which gaped to receive it without the wasting of a drop. "But youngsters who are just out of the Point—just got out of swaddling clothes—have got to remember that things and times and women are changing. There aren't any women these days; they're just ladies! They're too busy whimpering around Washington, using petticoat influence, saying that a killer is a bad man and is going to Hell. But it takes killers—with women behind 'em who know enough to keep their silly mouths shut—to clean up places."

The two men looked with somewhat of approval at the Colonel, who was glowering into his diminished glass.

"Here!" he called. "Siggy, you boy! *Poco* Scotch." He drank in gloomy silence. Then a rustle of Mrs. Robins's garments attracted his attention. He turned his eyes upon her. "I could have taken a handful of the right sort of men—rough men, that the ladies 'ud hate to dance with—and have gone down to Samar and cleaned it out! But what kept me up here? Well, you know very well—" he was speaking directly to his wife—"you know very well what kept me up here!"

Mrs. Robins said:

"Of course I know what kept you up here! It was your wife's good brains!"

This, at any rate, had got the conversation off Tom Vernay. Charlotte racked her own brain as to the best way to keep it off. She had heard some of the teachers planning what they called a junketing trip. They had got permission, through what they bragged was "pull" at the Ayuntamiento, to go the rounds of Southern Island ports on the refrigerating ship, the *Seward*; they would see everything, they told Charlotte—Moros, and all the rest of the wild men, including the Army serving down there. She said to the Colonel, with the nicest smile she could manage:

"Would it be possible for me to go on the trip on the *Seward*? And where would I have to get permission?"

Mrs. Robins gasped, "Well, I never!"

"Nothing to see," grumbled the Old Man. "Nothing—because of the squeamishness of Washington. Damned if I don't think the Spaniards had the right dope! They shipped their fellows out here and then forgot all about 'em. Might have been uncomfortable from the standpoint of recognition, but it was O. K. for whatever work they had to do. Give me a few roughnecks—le' me have 'em down along the Trail, in Mindanao—and let Washington, and the ladies in Washington, keep their mouths out of it until I can let those roughnecks have the same fair chance they had in the West—shootin' first and *not* explaining afterward——"

Charlotte persisted: "I'd like to see the bogie-man—

the Moro—at work.” It gave her a little pang, to say that. She and Tom Vernay had quarrelled once when she had used that expression “bogie-man”; he had told her that she nagged, and had said that men did not like women who nagged. He had told her that American girls insisted on calling a spade a spade; they were so confoundedly clear-eyed; if they would just stop talking about everything. He liked girls who could make a man dream romantically, and how could a man dream romantically about girls who shrieked when an ant got on them, who ran from bats, and who held their noses when they walked along the Moat? . . . Grant that she, Charlotte, did not fit into the mediæval city of his dreams; she could not help that; she could not have helped it if she had seen from the first that only a girl like Dolores fitted in. Vernay’s imagination had made a picture of it—a portrait by Velasquez of the Spanish young against a background of the past of their race. Old masonry crumbling behind their young figures, old cannon rusting above their young heads, and in their blood all the things that the old masonry and the old cannon meant. That was what he saw in Manila. Dolores represented for him history, tradition, his eternal romance—with the garment of pity that a brave man flings over the vanquished. But how would it be when he married her? She knew that, being nagged by his wife, a man would think of the woman he did not marry as the one who would never have nagged. The woman a man marries nags, and the woman he does not marry would never have nagged: that was the truth in a nutshell, as Charlotte saw it. . . .

The Old Man was growling at her:

"That's not the only bogie-man. Go on back to Washington and you'll see your fill of bogie-men at work. . . . And as to your going on that boat, the boat is already chock-a-block with politicians and their wives."

Charlotte continued to commune with herself: she did not care whether she got on the boat or not—although she would have been glad to get out of Manila for a time. Manila was bad because it was so small that when you wanted to take your mind off what was worrying you, you could not do it. You met it around any corner. . . . Tom Vernay was so sure that mystery was brunette. . . .

"And I tell you—" was saying the Colonel, who was telling them a great deal—"that if I hadn't known there'd be a howl from the ladies, I'd have asked to have this regiment sent down to the Cotabato Valley *this* time! I don't want a regiment with all their finger-nails manicured!"

And Mrs. Jennings suddenly shouted out, her little triangular face a blaze of anger:

"You know that isn't so of all of us! You know I don't howl!"

The Jenningses took Charlotte home. Mrs. Jennings cried in the calesa, leaning against Charlotte's shoulder. She would not say exactly what she was crying about; she kept sniffing, and wiping her little nose, and saying to Captain Jennings:

"I told him that lie because I'm ashamed that I ever *did* howl!"

Captain Jennings blew his nose. Charlotte knew that he

blew his nose because he had no other way of showing emotion.

She went up the dark stairs and opened her door. There was a good deal to be said for the Army, she was thinking; they traveled in crowds, crowds of people who knew each other. They were never lonely. There was a row going on in her room. The skinny Eurasian woman had Nicomedis by the ear; she was wringing the ear around and around as she boxed his other ear with her unengaged hand.

"I was trying to run Mr. House Snake off, as you did not like him," explained Nicomedis between yells.

"Oh, what a lie!" screamed the Eurasian. She landed another box on Nicomedis' ear. "He was looking in your clothes when I came in!"

"What *you* come in for?" asked Nicomedis, managing a leer between cuffings.

The Eurasian broke into inarticulate screams. Her slanted eyes rolled up until only the yellowish dirty whites showed. She let Nicomedis go and then pretended to Charlotte that he had slipped from her grasp.

"These thrice-confounded sons of the wild hogs must be managed," she said smoothly. Her eyes shifted from one tight end of the lids to the other tight end.

"You will please get me a key to my door by to-morrow," Charlotte said.

III

TOM VERNAY had got to the point where he no longer cared whether the family of Ayala would set the seal of their approval upon his meetings with Dolores. Charlotte surmised this, and it worried her constantly, being all the time in the back of her mind and frequently in the front of her mind as well. Things had rushed along from that day upon which she and Vernay had seen Dolores in the Cacho shop. Charlotte had seen much and guessed more, finally becoming convinced that Vernay was haunting the hanging garden of the Wall. She had been relieved of the idea that in this was something clandestine by the attitude of Paraiso. It was plain that Paraiso looked upon the affair with calmness. He walked with his friend on top of the Wall instead of walking with him to look at bridges—that was the only difference, if one discounted the fact that now they were three instead of two.

Charlotte—who had not been chaperoned since she had gone to college—was amused that Vernay walked chaperoned by the sedate Paraiso. She watched for signs of the restlessness under restraint that she was certain would develop.

It failed, however, to amuse her—the chance that the two on top of the Wall might be unwatched by the child who accompanied them. Her torment had grown and had forced her to a step which she hated herself for taking—which she regretted having taken, and which still she was glad, with a

fierce joy, that she had taken: she had gone up the Ramp herself, as Mrs. Robins had gone, when she knew that Vernay was on duty with his company.

It had been hard climbing up the steps of the Ramp. The Colonel was right: these steps, which were about a foot and a half in span, were built for the stride of a man. Her skirt had seemed trying to hold her back from her first attempt at spying. The Ramp itself had opposed her. She was not in tune with what the Wall stood for. With each step up, as her breath came shorter and her nervous heat grew, she had realized more clearly that she had no business here. By the time that she had taken the last straining step and had got to the top, she had been sorry that she had come. But she had set her lips and had walked out into the hanging garden that lies between the two parapets of the Wall.

The sun was not yet ready to set; she had timed her visit, as she must get away before Vernay should arrive for his tryst; but she imagined how it would look later on. The sun's rays would flare across the sky, opening out like a fan. The glow from this living fan would touch with warmth everything in the garden. The Cadena de Amor would blush a more rosy pink, its little sweet-pea blossoms lifting their heads and sniffing the first refreshing change of the air; the guiltily purple Esmeralda would get ready to shake off its telltale blooms, in order that with a new day it could with a new and pure white heart start a new life; the Four-o'clocks would close their eyes in sleep, and the Mimosas lay their leaves together for Vespers. No thing would watch Vernay and Dolores. No thing would have time to watch

Vernay and Dolores, because everything would be living its own intense quick life of the tropics.

Charlotte imagined what Vernay's eyes had seen; he would have watched this metamorphosis into a night masquerade with his eyes which saw only dreams and fantasies. To him, those last rays of the sun would be fingers twisted at the Americans—fingers to the nose of the night—fingers that, like the rays of the setting sun behind Corregidor, would be rubbing into him that the Americans had really done nothing beyond seeing to it that on future maps the colour of the Islands would be changed to the tint given by editors of geographies to American colonies. She had been dreaming herself, there underneath a little tree with crooked branches. She had taken off her hat and was leaning her head back against the twisted, tortured trunk of the tree. The grass was thick here, and fairly soft and springy.

The light had grown mellow. The grass had turned from its hot dark green to the freshness of apple green; the tops of the shrubs had become tinged with gold, and a golden powder had dropped over the whole hanging garden. The old pile of the Dominican Monastery, which abuts on the Wall, had been gloomy in its tones of grey; but it began to smile as the new light warmed it. Its shutters were being opened to catch the land breeze when it should spring up. From one of the opening windows a young monk looked down into the hanging garden. His pale face under its tonsured hair was thin and quiet and detached, and in his black eyes and on his high bold nose was a film of unreality and the curiosity of a child. He had watched Charlotte as she

sat under her tree, and she had watched him. She was thinking that behind his curiosity was the knowledge which the sun was flaunting with its last rays. She had wondered idly if this knowledge were the knowledge that Tom Vernay had been striving to get; and she had shaken herself impatiently and had arisen from her seat on the grass. It must be later than she had realized. In a sudden panic she had run toward the Ramp. She was thinking, as she ran, how she had satisfied herself that no one could watch Vernay and Dolores except the monks who should look from their opening windows.

But she had been longer in the hanging garden than she had realized. Coming up . . . up . . . up, step by step, was Dolores; and coming behind her, step by step, there had appeared the sleek and uncovered head of a Filipino girl.

The Filipino girl had remarked in a loud whisper that who could say where these Americanas would be next?

Charlotte had watched Dolores, as she strolled slowly, and with the mincing step of the woman in shoes whose vamps are short and whose heels are high. She wondered at the absence of Paraiso and it disturbed her. The Filipina, having seen her mistress safely into the garden, had disappeared; Charlotte had found her waiting in the street at the foot of the Ramp. The girl had saucily come up and spoken to her: "Was she not the ticher whose praises her little brother Pio had sung?" Charlotte had been upset by this, and had the next day sent a note to Vernay, who had hastened around to her boarding house in the Calle Real.

Where had the Ayalas got hold of this Josefa? she had asked him.

Vernay had looked confused, and she had been surprised at that; it was not like him to be confused in just this way. He had always a candid stare.

"To tell you the truth," he had started, "Saulsbury recommended her to me. She was a girl who wanted a place, and he asked me if I knew of one. And I happened to know that the Ayalas wanted a maid—Paraiso told me—so I recommended this girl."

"What did Dick tell you about her—besides the fact that she wanted a place?"

"What's the matter?" Vernay had demanded. "All he told me was that she was a nice little thing who was poor and deserving, and ought to be earning her living. She was probably living on her old mother before she got this place; don't they usually do that? Why?" he again demanded.

"But why are you looking ashamed of yourself, then—if that's all?" Charlotte had demanded in her turn. She knew she had had no business to say that.

"Oh, now, Charlotte," Vernay had begun, "I know exactly what you think; and it's not so. Saulsbury wasn't at all interested in this girl—not in the way you mean! Why on earth do you let your mind run on such things?"

"Oh, well—" Charlotte had then said—"don't think any more about it. I daresay I ought to apologize for having suspected that—that—you knew. You did look squeamish, you see!"

Vernay had blushed. "That was because I had felt, at

the time, that I was too awfully glad to get a girl into the place who'd be rather under obligations to me, you know."

Of course! He had been glad to get up on the Wall without Paraiso!

Vernay had continued, still greatly embarrassed: "This girl, Josefa—Saulsbury said he heard of her through you, by the way."

Charlotte had stared at him.

"Hasn't she a brother or sister or something at your school?" Vernay had persisted.

"Yes," she had said, and had stopped dead. She had begun again: "Look here, Tommy—there is something I ought to tell you, as you've put your foot in this—" And then the old embarrassment that had hung between them for the past months had flung its numbness over her; and she had seen her numbness reflected in his eyes.

"About this girl Josefa——"

But she had had to call it after him, and he had not listened. He had taken his leave abruptly and had run off down the garden to the street. Of late he had had a way of running from her. As he reached the banquetta he had pulled out his handkerchief and had wiped his forehead. He had thought that Charlotte had meant to appeal to his compassion, hanging on like this: she had known he thought that and she had laughed. She was laughing at both him and herself.

She had been talking to Mrs. Robins:

"Did that old lady who sold her jewels—those pearl combs and rosaries that you bought—did she ever call?"

"To begin with," had said Mrs. Robins, "I didn't get a chance at the rosary. That horrid Cacho pair told me how wonderful it was—that the gold beads had coral balls inside their filigree work; and that the Reliquary was a marvel—and I was crazy for it. I wanted to wear it as a necklace. I told her I'd take it—I didn't even ask the price—and she said she'd sold it to an officer. Mean of that woman Cacho, I thought; and I told her so, and she smirked at me with the impudence of those rich *Mestizas* and said that the officer hadn't haggled! Yes: she even used that insolent word—haggled! . . . No, my dear, that fat Spanish woman has *not* called! She isn't going to call. None of them have called on any of us. The Colonel met one or two of the men in a business way; and they were extremely polite and urged him to say when we'd be at home. The Colonel thought, when they persisted that he set a day, that they were hinting, and he made me write and ask them to dinner with their wives. Would you believe it that they accepted and never came? Just about a quarter of an hour before dinner time they each sent around notes that their brother-in-law had just died. They always send around word that a brother-in-law has just died: it's a stock excuse. . . . I wish I knew *what* officer had cut in under me with the rosary!"

Charlotte had persisted: "What's the reason, do you suppose, that they won't be friendly with us?"

"Oh, the Colonel excuses it! He says he knows how they feel. He says they are brooding, embittered people with a beautiful surface courtesy; and he thinks it's all right for

them to be morose toward us when we beat them. But I don't think it is that at all. Look at their faces! Did you ever see one that looks as if it could *ever* be agreeable? When they smile, even at each other, they suggest knives. However, I don't mind their keeping to themselves; I don't want the job of breaking their shells. I don't care for their remarks, as we pass them in the streets, about our being traders. You know perfectly well, Charlotte—at least, your mother does—that I for one did not come of trading people. My people have always been lawyers. But the Colonel says that these Spaniards he's met firmly believe the *Army* paid those twenty millions for them! I'm sick of hearing that they don't hate being whipped in a fight—that what they hate is the having been bought. That's nonsense. What they hate is any other race than their own."

But Tom Vernay had not been thinking of these racial barricades. He had been walking the streets by night—Charlotte had known it. She had seen it in his eyes which were tired, and in his face which was rapt. She had walked the streets herself, trying to find the spell that had led him away. She had seen him ahead, moving slowly, lingering beside some wall over which the breath of jasmines was blowing. A child at her school had told her that the ugly thing called the *Dama de la Noche* brought good luck in love if one's senses could catch its elusive fragrance. Tom Vernay, standing outside the garden, was catching the fragrance; and Charlotte, a little way down the street, was missing it. She had turned and run back to the calesa that she had extravagantly hired for this night jaunt; and,

when she had got back to her hot room, had thrown herself face down on her uncomfortable bed. . . . Spain had brought these different jasmines to the Philippines as she had brought them to the Gulf States of America; wherever she had planted her flag she had also planted the jasmines. And these girls of Spain—cultivated flowers of old gardens—had caught a headiness from the hot air which blew over the transplanted gardens. . . . Charlotte writhed on her bed.

The smallness of white Manila continued to throw her with Vernay. "Parties" had thrown them together; the Escolta had thrown them together; the Luneta had brought them face to embarrassed face. They had hastily talked of everything except the one thing of which they had both been thinking; and she had watched his face and had known that he thought his friends silly, chattering idiots; and she had chattered the more because of this knowledge of his thoughts. She would go home enraged with herself. Could she not see that she ought to be subdued, that she ought to hide her intelligence behind a veil as alluring as a mantilla? She would demand these things of herself, lying face down on the hard bed. Tom Vernay had had to *come back* to her presence—come back from his memories of another type of girl.

It had been a long time before he had told her about it. And then she could do nothing but try to help him. She had understood that he was throwing himself on her mercy. He had told her that he had bought the rosary the day after they had been in the Cacho shop.

He had made it plain that he regarded her, Charlotte, as

outside the realm of a man's imagination. She was a piece of up-to-date, smoothly running machinery—useful, handsome. She knew he regarded her as handsome; she could remember things that he had said before he had gone with her to the Cacho shop: but now he looked upon her beauty as the beauty of something that was handsome because complete in every detail toward that usefulness of machinery. Dolores de Ayala had come to represent for him those things which she had failed to reach in his imagination. Charlotte did not try to fool herself about where she stood. From the first sight of the Spanish girl she had felt around her heart the squeeze of a cold hand.

This squeeze of the cold hand was reinforced by what she saw in her mirror. A blond face which was aging in the climate of Manila; fine wrinkles coming around the eyes; dryness coming to the cheeks; a suggestion of the yellow of hay coming over hair which had been the gold of sunshine. By the time that she had moved into the Walled City, the slenderness of her figure had turned to thinness. With her opening eyes, which were seeing more deeply than when she had come to Manila, she grew to see the thing from the eyes of Vernay himself. She saw that every tint of her face, every line of her figure meant the cold North on which he was turning his back. She determined to face it squarely. She tilted the small mirror over her improvised dressing-table and stood before it with all the candles lit and placed nearby. She saw that her shoulders were broader than her hips; and she remembered that Dolores had the classic female ovoid shape, sloping out gently from the neck to the hips and

in as gently to the ankles. She saw that her chest was almost as undeveloped as a boy's, and she hated it—for she had seen that Dolores, at nineteen, had the fullness of maturity. Intelligence, education, also in contrast: Charlotte knew this, and she also knew that it did her no good with Vernay. Her knowledge had come from study, from thought; and, to the masculine mind in search of romance, it was more alluring that Dolores did not think but merely felt the thoughts that she had inherited from her country's history. Dolores, who seemed not to think, unconsciously knew those things which were opening to Vernay. They were not good things for Vernay: Charlotte had all along felt sure of that. Charlotte, shocked by what she had seen of the open warmth of emotion of women in this part of the world, had also seen its effect upon men.

"Confound it all!" she said to her reflection in the mirror. "I wouldn't do it if I could!"

"Damn it all!" she said a little later on in her inspection of her Anglo-Saxon figure. "He can understand me because we're of the same people: that's what is turning him to her. She is the kind of girl who is a riddle to him. How easy it is to hold a man—if you just see how to do it before it's too late!"

And yet again: "Why—that girl, no matter what she does on top of the Wall, will dump it on the bosom of her Church!"

Flamelike as the tropics—that was Dolores as Charlotte saw her. If things did not happen on top of the Wall—so spoke Charlotte's midnight suspicions—it would be because

Vernay protected her from her own emotions. With a mantilla, and a fan—so Charlotte said to herself—and no one coming and going on top of the Wall . . . Charlotte knew that it had been Vernay who had kept an even keel—if an even keel had been kept. And in her calm moments she acknowledged to herself that nothing else was possible with Tom Vernay.

He had said that Dolores did not try to hold herself in check and refuse to come to the Wall, "because she could always do a penance." That had sounded in his ears, Charlotte surmised, as a call from the very names of those narrow streets in Dolores' Intramuros. Big names to little streets that barely allow two carabao carts to pass; big passions that end in a penance. Steel behind the idea of the big names, and no steel behind the big passions because that steel is supplied by the Church whenever necessary. No steel in Dolores; Charlotte was sure of that. Strange—that Vernay had been hot to conquer Charlotte when Charlotte had been so beautifully capable of refusing to be conquered—there had been times when she had known that she stirred him—and that he was now so bent on holding Dolores back from headlong surrender;—that he had been himself stirred to passion by the girl who held back, and to tenderness and romance by the girl who must be held back.

He had explained this point of romance to Charlotte by saying that she was good sense, balance, virtue in woman, loyalty, *soundness* in a word.

"You would never need protection, Charlotte: it is inconceivable that you should!" he had said. "But poor little

Dolores must be protected throughout her life. She is such a child."

There had been tears in Charlotte's eyes when she had thought it over. She so wanted to be protected!

IV

“O H, Charlotte!” came the voice of Mrs. Robins over the telephone which the teachers had at last installed in their house. “*Do* you mind seeing to something for me?” The voice, squeaking over badly run wires, carried a clear suggestion of Mrs. Robins’s past great kindness to Charlotte’s mother. “You’re so close at hand, and I should have to take valuable time off from a party that I am giving this evening. Will you drop in at the Dos Hermanos and see why they haven’t sent the Colonel’s new white uniforms? Tell them he is counting on those uniforms by this evening. You might just hint that they are making a mistake by not coming up to the mark with a high-ranking officer—they’ll understand that. . . . What? You’re about to start off for school? But it is right in your way, if you hurry and start a few minutes ahead of time, my dear! . . . What? You’re late as it is? Well! I never heard of such ingratitude, Charlotte! After all I’ve done for you!”

Charlotte had not been invited to this party. She reflected bitterly that she saw too few Americans—always excepting the teachers—to keep her feet on the ground. She would be going juramentado if she did not watch herself. The great humidity of the rainy season was getting in a sly hint of its approach, and she had found it impossible to cool off during the night just past. She answered Mrs. Robins snappishly:

"It's absolutely impossible for me to go by the tailors' on my way to school. I've got to keep my job. I'll stop in on my way home this afternoon: that's the best I can do. I've got to keep my job."

"If that's the way you feel about it——" grudged Mrs. Robins. "But your job is all nonsense! You ought to be thinking of getting married. That was what you came out for, wasn't it?"

Charlotte went down the street softly beating her hands against each other. This was a new trick; she had never done it at home. She had held that repose of the hands showed the self-control of an intelligent human being; she had left gestures to the uneducated. She was profoundly scandalized to find in her heart a desire to slap Mrs. Robins, to scream at her, and pull out handfuls of her hair.

She wondered—during the day when her hands continued to itch for Mrs. Robins and she had much trouble keeping them off the crop-headed native boys and long-haired native girls—whether she had been out here too long?

She seemed, of late, to have trouble controlling herself. Tears had never before pushed against her eyelids in an effort to get out and roll down her cheeks. She would say to herself, a dozen times a day, that she did not know what caused the tears to so accumulate.

"It isn't—it *isn't!*" she was saying below her breath as she went into the shop of the Dos Hermanos.

The Dos Hermanos were busily trapping an officer who was new to the Philippines, and as Charlotte was a woman she had to wait. She knew that they were muttering to

each other—their fat lips moving in unison—“*Las mujeres!*” and that their shoulders were shrugging as they bent before the male. Before the last year, she had not cared to waste a moment on the suffrage question. She stood near the open door of the shop, looking out into the narrow street and wondering if men like Vernay would understand why she was thinking of it now; and she knew, as she wondered, that they would not understand. Dolores’ type was the dream, Charlotte’s type the reality, of the female, to men like Vernay who still preferred—had slid back to—an appreciation of the type that his sex preferred when the Wall of the city was built. Staring out into the blaze of light in the street, Charlotte blinked rapidly in her effort to assist the lids in keeping back the tears. She could not help it that she was of a newer type. “Thank God!” she said to herself, “I am the new type!”

“The other sort have no brains,” she said to herself. “That’s what’s the matter with them—they have no brains, and would be too darned lazy to use them if they *had* them! I wouldn’t be like that if I could!” But she acknowledged, when she was honest with herself, that she was sick of having a brain. A brain worked whether you were tired or not, whether you were worried or not, whether you wanted to be a silly little fool who attracted men or whether you went back to your old way of being proud that you did not care whether or not you attracted them.

Clouds—the Breath of the Wind, the Tagbanuas called them—were rolling up over the hot white sky. They always rolled up for sunset, looking like long-necked birds of

prey who were after swallowing the sun. Native couples were going home from work, the men walking ahead of the meek, shrivelled wives: en paseo, but holding always the relative rank of the family out here. The wind was coming in gusts, unlike its steadiness of the dry season. Men and women wiped their faces with large pocket-handkerchiefs. The southwest monsoon was on its way. Charlotte reflected that she had been sensible to buy for the sun a parasol which could keep off water. She looked at the clumsy, oiled-paper contrivance which was too heavy for her thin hands. It smelt evilly of fish oil, but the light shining between its red-bamboo ribs was tinged by oiling to a restful amber; and on the top was an attractive splash of Chinese lettering in black. She had fancied that panel of lettering: it might be some quaintness of Confucian philosophy: but Mrs. Jennings, when Charlotte had said something of the sort about her new umbrella, had screamed with laughter.

"It's an advertisement of that *chino* grocery shop where you bought it!" she had shrieked. "You're paying the *chino* for the privilege of being his sandwich-man! Can you beat that—in Yankee land? You ought to tell Dick Saulsbury about it. It's progress!"

Charlotte did not care. She was looking admiringly at her umbrella now. When the Dos Hermanos at last worked around to her, because there were no more men customers in the shop, she put it carefully against the bolts of linen. She gave the message about the Colonel's uniforms, and was told that they were ready but could not be delivered this afternoon because the Americanos had run up such a high

scale of wages that they, the pobre Dos Hermanos, had not enough messenger boys on hand.

"The *General*—" they gasped with respect—"the *General*, he iss to be served first, *señorita*; it iss the *costumbre*. But a *coronel* iss also *muy grande*: he will be served *mañana*."

"Oh, well, then," exclaimed Charlotte with a burst of good humour—"I'll take the package. Get it tied up in a hurry."

She stood by while whatever of respect the Dos Hermanos had entertained for her went up in the smoke of their disgust that one should carry a package when one was not paid to do it.

She returned to her position near the door. Josefa was sauntering, swaggering along the banquetta. She smirked at Charlotte.

Charlotte turned back into the room to question the Dos Hermanos. "Do you know that girl who has just passed?"

The Dos Hermanos, moving as with one set of muscles, one pair of legs, scrambled on those short legs to the door and peered at Josefa's switching back. Josefa tossed her head and twisted it, in the course of the toss, and looked over her shoulder. There was in her coal-black, opaque eye a lurking devil of a taunt. The Dos Hermanos burst into excitement. They protested that they themselves were mucho amigo. They knew "that Josefa"—yes! But did the buena señorita, who was so good as to come out to the Philippines to help their people, did she think for one moment of telling the Coronel at the Cuartel that they were not mucho amigo because they knew such an one as Josefa? That Josefa, she was very bad. She was Katipunan. She and her lover,

Estéban Perez, were against all whites. Josefa, she lived with the whites; but it was only to get dinero for Estéban to squander on the cockpit. Josefa was an egg that was incredibly old!

Charlotte took her bundle and trudged along the street toward the Cuartel. Why not let this thing go on until the Ayalas found out what sort of maid Vernay had introduced into their household? That would break up the meetings on top of the Wall. All she had to do was to stay out of a business which was not her business anyway. She had tried to warn Vernay of worse than this about Josefa, and he had run away because he was determined not to talk with her upon this subject. She had done all that could be expected. If she said anything further to him she would be meddling; that would be what he, being a man, would think of her. But she knew, all the while she was reminding herself of these things, that she was going to meddle once more.

She was passing the Army and Navy Club. Number One Boy was standing in the open doorway regarding the clouding skies. He had seen Charlotte at the hops, and nodded affably and with the conscious condescension of the Oriental male. Charlotte hesitated before his indifferent eye. It took courage to ask him to hunt up the Teniente and say that a lady wished to speak with him.

Vernay's blue eyes were full of sleep, and were slightly reddened in the way that blue eyes have when sleep has been forcibly snatched from them. He carried his cap in his hand and Charlotte proposed that they walk a few blocks together.

"It is really important," she added, and started in at once telling him what the Dos Hermanos had said to her.

It is the Devil who brings up people about whom one is gossiping; but this time the Devil was in a friendly mood. Josefa came into sight, having doubled around the little city blocks as Charlotte had walked slowly in a straight line. She was shaking her hips. She came up and spoke directly to Vernay. She clutched at his sleeve and turned on a ready flow of tears.

"*Poco dinero?*" she whined. "It iss for my little brother Pio who needs rice."

Vernay had slipped his hand into his pocket with so accustomed an air that Charlotte at once understood that he had been in the habit of acceding to established bleeding. He glanced rather sheepishly at Charlotte, and demurred to Josefa, and kept his hand in his pocket.

"What for?" he demanded.

Charlotte thought: of course Josefa would say, for the rice. But Josefa did not again mention the rice for Pio.

"The so funny *Americanos!*" she gave him back. "I see the *Señor* Saulsbury to-night. You must help me out, *Señor Teniente*. For he has said that if I so soon again ask for the *dinero* he will keeck me out."

Charlotte drew a deep breath and was grateful to Josefa. She heard Vernay, beside her, draw in his own breath sharply. She glanced at him and saw that a blush was rising from the line of the white piqué stock which showed above his khaki.

"Wait!" he commanded Josefa; and turned to Charlotte

and again laid down his hand. "Charlotte, what ought I to do?"

Josefa's beady but large eyes were turning from one to the other. She arranged her pañuella, smoothed her hair, and re-draped her long, starched skirt over her elbow, glancing down to be sure that her numerous petticoats showed below the red-and-yellow cotton.

"Hm!" was all that she said. She said it meditatively.

"Look here!" Vernay started at her. "You clear out of the *Casa Ayala* to-night and I give you this"; and he showed her a ten-peso bill.

"For why?" countered the smiling Josefa, who had neglected to weep for some time past. "Me, I am good enough for Mees Charlotte Carson to come to a *baile* at my mother's house!" The smile that she gave Charlotte, as Charlotte plainly saw, was a nice mixture of insolence with ingratiation for a purpose. "Mees Charlotte Carson iss an *Americana* of a good heart. Ask her! She has met my Estéban. Ask her if she did not like heem varry moch!" The girl grinned straight into Charlotte's amazed eyes and went on in the drawl of off-colour insolence: "She lofes the Filipino people; she lofed my Estéban. She will speak up for me with the *Teniente*?"

"You see?" Vernay was hissing into Charlotte's ear which was so nearly on a level with his own ear. "What are you doing, mixing up with these swine?"

Charlotte's hand was on his arm. "Take care! Don't enrage her. I know them better than you do. Give her the money."

Vernay's blush had left his face. His mouth was grim. She saw that he was not going to take her advice, that he had not even heard her advice. He held back with the ten-peso bill.

"You leave the *Casa Ayala* to-night?" he pressed Josefa. She grinned: "*Quanto dinero?*"

Vernay blushed again, suddenly. Charlotte, from the wisdom of the salaried, remembered that it was the end of the month; and her fury rose as she caught the look of contempt that Josefa flashed on the ten-peso bill. Josefa threw her head back, and hitched her skirt higher on her elbow.

"Mother of God!" she shouted, screaming with laughter. "Fool of an *Americano!* I get that much from the Señor Saulsbury in one little minute—like that—" she lifted one shoulder and one hip, and purred with a low croon—"and keep my situation too!" She was off down the banquetta, in every switch of her petticoats the hint that she was having a grand time and that never in her life had she shed a genuine tear.

Vernay was feebly cursing the idea of educating these natives anyway: and he was apologizing to Charlotte for his cursing, and cursing again at what Josefa had thrown out about Estéban.

"You don't understand," he was repeating. "They can't take it in why you lower yourself to teach them. Oh, damn it, Charlotte, you've got to cut it out and go on home! I hate this idea of a woman's working when she doesn't actually need bread! And certainly not out here! What do you get for it? Nasty insinuations! I'd have wrung her

neck if she'd been a man; and then you'd have hopped on me because the filthy native man was smaller than I am! I tell you, the Spaniards knew what they were about when they drew their colour line!"

"That isn't the point just now, is it?" asked Charlotte. She spoke quietly. Of course he did not understand that she had been actuated by a desire to help suffering humanity; and she would not for the world own up to him that every now and then she felt like bursting into shrieks of laughter at herself. It did not matter that her ideals had gone to smash. She would not have to own up to anyone. She would simply go home when her second term of service expired; she would say that her health could not stand another term in the tropics.

But Vernay was continuing to talk at her. He said:

"Those old fellows of 1591 knew more than we know right now. Can't you see that? Don't you *feel* that the jungle is close by—and that the jungle is a tangled, twisted mass of something which is not human but which seems to move with an intelligence? And don't you get it that these natives are a part of the jungle and the white men are not?"

"That would make it their land; wouldn't it?" But she was talking against time. It was a small matter whether the land belonged to the Filipinos or not. She thought that Vernay looked ill.

But there was nothing that she could say to him. He did not listen, these days, to gossip; and that was all she had to contribute—the gossip that she heard from Mrs. Jennings. Vernay was dodging army gatherings. He shrugged his lean

shoulders at "shop" talk, was left cold by the speculations of brother officers over "files."

"Why," he had said to her at one of the gatherings, "they are talking about the same things that they discussed, I'll bet, when *they* graduated and went out to the Indian frontier back home! Lord! If I don't manage, some way, to *grow up* as I grow older!"

Captain Jennings, standing by, had said:

"Not letting Manila get you, are you, son? You're an American and not a spinnacher, you know."

No: Vernay had said to Charlotte then: he was not letting Manila get him. Every afternoon on the Luneta when he watched the blessed flag come down to be folded away for the night, he knew that he was an American, and that he loved the United States so much that the least he could do was to be waiting to fight, and maybe die, whenever it was needful. The trouble was—he had gone on,—they had not asked him to fight; they had stuck him down in the Cuartel de España to mark time.

But this had been a long while ago—the "party" at which he had said this. And since then, when she had tried to sound him, he had been beyond her reach although standing there in front of her. He looked as if he were putting his hands on dream stuff. He impressed her as not wanting, not needing companionship. It had been by a fluke that he had told her about the top of the Wall. He had for so long been held off from the girl's family. From what he said, and more from what he did not say, she had understood; he had been held back from any definite step by some lurking fear

of disrespect to a dim uneasiness within his breast. She had watched him on the Luneta—where, if you have not seen your friends, you can always find them if you wait long enough because they are obliged, by some pull of the air as the breeze gets ready to change for the night, to follow that flux of air to the sea. She had noticed that he never said why he was waiting until after the crowds of Americans had gone. But she knew; she had been with him when first they had understood that the Ayalas would not be present at the ceremony of retreat. It was a beautiful ceremony; Charlotte, who was not army, acknowledged that the profession of the sword—which she resented with her brain—had, mingled with what seemed to her to be mediæval barbarity, a very lovely, almost plaintive appeal to the emotions by way of sound and form and ceremony.

The Luneta would be thronged with the mixture of races which were trying to boil down into a colony. The elliptical drive around the two bandstands would be boiling, as the numerous little vehicles followed the rule of the road—turning to the left or to the right as the speed of the ponies and the dexterity and daring of the drivers indicated—beating the other fellow by foul means: no other rule. The promenade would be boiling with groups of all colours, each shade glancing askance at other shades of white or yellow or brown; everywhere women, and men making love to women. Prancing over the sparsely growing grass of the ellipse, a boiling together of children who mixed no better than their elders. The children were garrulously tended by nurses who themselves refused to mix, nurses of as varied races as their

charges: amahs in Chinese costumes of black-satin trousers and bright silk coats, Japanese in sombre kimonos, Filipinas rattling with rice starch. Concerted rushes of white children would drive from the grass children whose freshly washed skins were brown or yellow; white children flourishing little swagger-sticks and yelling the insults of white men for their foes.

Captain Jennings would shout to his own obstreperous son:

"Didn't I tell you that if you used that stick for anything but walking I'd take it from you? Come here!"

Charlotte had seen Captain Jennings break in two several of his son's swagger-sticks. His son would return to the grass and use his fists.

And then would come the first bugle notes of retreat from the band which had learned to sound army calls. The faces of the brown bandsmen would be proud as they puffed out their cheeks and blasted through their bugles. Soldiers and sailors and officers, American women and children, would cease their play of talk, their flirtations, their carnage on the grass; they would face about until their eyes were fixed on the flag up over the mixture of the Luneta. For the duration of "The Star Spangled Banner," into which the band would swing at the end of the bugle call, the Americans would remain at peace with their world out here in the Orient.

Vernay never had long to wait after that; and Charlotte would go home with Ellen. She would know that as she was carried off the Luneta, the Ayala calesa would be turning in from the Bagumbayan, the little horse trying to be gay, the

cochero trying to be gay as he prodded the horse with the butt of his whip and screamed maledictions on his speed; but the occupants of the back seat, and of the little seat which had come down behind the cochero's perch, would be still and set in their tragedy; the girl, in her youth and beauty and rebellious heart, inmeshed in her web—a maiden under a spell.

It was unnatural that, while the Americans went through their pretty ceremony at the close of the day, this family was never there—that they came upon the scene, always, when the night had blotted out the striped flag. This was the sort of thing, Charlotte thought, that had made Vernay believe himself to be on the track of dreams. It was, too, of the stuff of dreams that the Ayalas, for the sake of their past, did not consider the possibility of staying on in the Islands and profiting by the new business opportunities opened up by the Americans; that they were going back, at no matter what sacrifice, to where their past meant something.

Saulsbury railed against Don Sebastian. He had approached the old man, he told Charlotte, with a scheme for building modern concrete structures on his sugar hacienda, "putting his best foot foremost and making a paying proposition of it."

"He froze me out," Saulsbury told her. "I never got such a frost—the old dunce! You'd have thought I was trying to swindle him, instead of showing the old dunderhead how to make a wad of kale. Why—even if he sticks to his idea of going back to Spain, he could sell the shebang for a lot more if he had *something* modern on it! No business

sense! And a fishy eye—when he wasn't so mad that fire burst out of it right into my own eye!"

"To be without traditions, *señor*—" Don Sebastian had said to Saulsbury—"is to be without that so beautiful sense of the past."

Then—Saulsbury told Charlotte—Doña Adelina had sighed from the vast depths of her bosom, and with the sigh had brought forward such a rich business acumen that he, Saulsbury, had been startled into agreeing with her that a people should abide by the ways of their fathers, and should swear allegiance to some crown and to the only Church. In this pliable agreement—he laughed at himself—he had not been for the moment false; for, in that old house of an old family of an old race, it was rushing over him that old customs had the certain virtue of stability. He could admire stability; it was a good business asset.

"So you actually got in the house?" Charlotte had wondered.

"What house?" had demanded Saulsbury.

"That pink stucco, locked-up house. The *Casa Ayala*," she had told him.

"Well—" Saulsbury was still laughing at himself—"not as what you might call a friend! I was talking business with the old man; at least, I'd have been talking business with him if he'd had a brain that could take in my proposition. He let me in there to see what I had to put up to him, and then he turned the evil eye on me and the old lady put me to flight. She's the holder of the money bags, all right! The man of the family. You could see that. She made me come

down to looking upon myself as 'of a sadness' because I wasn't a spinnacher—you know how they put things in their lingo?—doomed, as a member of a race without a past. The good God had done this thing to me, and therefore, she, the old lady, was certain that she was helping God out by rubbing it in on me that we'd done a damnable thing when we wiped from the map of Asia a race who had sent out the Ayalas. She made me so mad finally that I let out on her. I said that in America we were so new and vulgar that we didn't let the ladies boss us about our business; and with that I whirled on the old man and asked him again if he'd give me the concession. That Doña Adelina—whew! She rolled those sort of full black eyes around at me from where she was sitting in one of those uncomfortable carved chairs—her feet didn't touch the ground, Charlotte; and that would have taken the starch out of *you*, wouldn't it?—and she made a speech. If I hadn't been studying Spanish hard, lately, I couldn't have caught a word of it; those high-class Dons roll it around under their tongues and spit it out, until you don't believe they're talking the same language the men in the *fondas* do. 'Aha! *señor!*' she said—or something like *aha*: it was a glorified sniff, anyway—"There is nothing in this new equality of the sexes as you practise it in *los Estados Unidos*! They are not equal. Each fights with its own weapons. You are surprised? But of course I know of the new ideas of women—their claims to equality with men; and I know that the whole thing is the idea of fools. For why should women, if they are shrewd and understand the weaknesses of men, want more than Nature has given them? Women,

señor, of the Latin races, they are the holders of the power because of their greater shrewdness in money matters.' And she proceeded to lean back in her chair—she filled it full up—and fan herself under her hanging, powdered chin. 'The dispensation of God,' she started up again, 'has given to women a frugality that he withheld from men.' And she came down with her frugality, and put an end to the business talk, and shooed me out of the *casa*. Gosh! I'd hate to have my wife—when I get one—sitting on me like that! What they do—women like that—is to get a husband and then grow fatter every year, no divorce being in their system."

"What sort of house was it?" Charlotte had persisted.

Saulsbury had looked surprised at this persistence but had gone on to gratify it as best he could, who only considered the outside shell of a house.

"Oh, it's the type that they call a 'little palace.' It has—that means in plain English—rooms that are bigger and ceilings that are higher than the regular *casa*, and floors that are mahogany and too slippery for my feet—I nearly broke my neck! And all the chairs are in straight rows around the walls, and in a double line down the center of the *sala*. Usual thing, and as ugly as mud. It wasn't in the *look* of the house that I got my freeze-out; it was in the *feel* of it, and in the feel of Don Sebastian's hand. That hand was skinny and dry and felt like old paper that I might tear if I didn't go slow; the veins were swollen and full of purple blood. I almost got Vernay's loony ideas. I was sure, while I was shaking hands with the old duck, that that purple blood hadn't circulated since the last time the Spaniards got

licked in a fight! It was dreadfully warm; and the family was all huddled at the far end of the *sala* where the oyster-shell windows were pushed back in their grooves (they wouldn't have to push 'em in grooves if they'd build the right way, of course; but they won't believe that) and I got to envying the free Filipinos in the street below!"

Saulsbury was not the only one who had "got Vernay's loony ideas." As he talked, Charlotte could see Vernay in that awful room, with the family of Ayala huddled together at the end where the concha windows were open; the noises of the street below coming in to roar in Vernay's ears and meet the roaring of the beating of his heart. Vernay did not know it—he had never been inside a Spanish house, but Charlotte had had occasion to go into the house of a family who was so second-best that their children went to the new American schools—but Dolores would have spoken only when her parents spoke directly to her. And Tom Vernay would have sat there, in one of the uncomfortable chairs, and stolen looks at her; and into his imagination there would have filtered the alluring beauty of his idea of her race. Charlotte told herself—impatiently, but with an impatience that was near to tears—that Tom Vernay did not know it, but it was Dolores' race which was upsetting him. His eyes saw the beauty of her face, but the glamour of her race he was seeing with his eyes closed—feeling it with his new mind. It was seeping in together with his admiration of the old masonry of this city which her ancestors had built on ground that they had conquered. The pair of closed doors of the

Casa Ayala had forever shut for him the open doors which would have led him to Charlotte Carson.

Charlotte had shut her teeth on the picture of Vernay in the Casa Ayala. In this state of mind she no longer remembered that Vernay, in fact, had never got within the Casa Ayala. Tom Vernay, drinking the ugly brown mess of that liqueur which is the favorite of the Spanish people in Manila—the deadly-sweet Cacao; drinking it to the last drop, although he disliked it; drinking it because he would be careful to stand in the good graces of the thin Don Sebastian and the stout Doña Adelina! There would be a gentle breeze blowing into the room and stirring Vernay's unruly hair. The breeze would be coming from the garden at the side of the house, and down in the garden the topmost leaves of the Travellers' Delight would be flapping; but into the dreadful sala it would not have wafted delight to travellers—that breeze which had been let into the Intramuros through breaches blown in the Wall by American engineers. Charlotte knew that it was all glamour, and beat her hands together that it was so.

V

SHE went over it all again, in her head, that night after she had gone to bed; in her schoolroom the next day, as her native pupils chanted lessons in the singsong drone that the priests had taught them and that she found it impossible to unteach them. The drone sounded in her ears as a torment. It tickled on her ear-drums until its twang became agony and she feared that she would scream out at these smiling children who were her only genuine admirers.

Time was beginning to scare Tom Vernay—a feeling of the inevitability of time; it was beginning to mix in his imagination with the feeling of time and inevitability that the old Wall had succeeded in forcing into his brain. The Ayalas were selling the mantillas off their heads in their determination to get away from the Islands. They had sold the pony and the calesa, so that no longer could they take the fresh air of the late afternoons. This was hard; for being Spanish they could not sit on the banquetta and fan, as did Filipinos when the nights were hot. Their garden must be damp from the seepage of the Moat through many centuries; Charlotte knew that it must be so, for her own garden was so mouldy that the house lizards would not go out there lest they wet their feet. There was nothing for it but that the Ayalas walk abroad. But Charlotte had noticed that the feet of Doña Adelina were extremely short; she could

not take a step in the high-heeled slippers that she wore when dressed in her black silks. Walking, for Doña Adelina, would be agony tearing the heart of the good Virgin to whom she prayed for more money. However, it did not matter to Tom Vernay that the stout lady could not walk for her fresh air; for Dolores, although her feet too were small, was still of a slimness which could ascend the Ramp; and Dolores walked in the cool of the evenings on top of the Wall, and in the mornings went to confessional and in the early afternoons did a penance. This was the fashion in which Charlotte—sitting in her hot schoolroom and trying not to listen to the droning of her pupils—divided up Dolores' day. And Charlotte in her Unitarian heart was scornful. She saw no harm in the top of the Wall; but Dolores did see harm in it and went straight ahead and did, day after day, that in which she saw harm.

Charlotte, happening at this time to glance into the little mirror which she kept in her desk, noticed that her lips were curling. Tom Vernay had an Episcopal mind; maybe he saw nothing out of the way in this. Charlotte said to herself that the Episcopal mind is nearer the Catholic mind than is the Unitarian; and that Tom Vernay was probably in the mind just now to cross himself and give thanks to some hazy saint for working up the top of the Wall.

Because Tom Vernay wished above all on earth to have the right of entry into the Casa Ayala, and he felt a conviction that never would he be admitted. And because he knew beyond argument that he would never enter the closed doors, the closed doors seemed to be shutting him from all

that life should hold. He, and the future, were on the street side of the closed doors; while behind them was what beauty life had hidden from him, had given him a peep at, and was still withholding. The doors held him to his side of things.

They were the first doors which had been shut to him—Charlotte thought, with a laugh that was part bitterness and a great part tenderness; and reminded herself that he would never get in and was sorry and glad, at the same time, that this was so. The Americans had been able to take over the Spanish government buildings such as the Club in which Vernay lived. There was nothing personal in government buildings. But when they tried to get behind the walls of private residences they were met by closed doors. The Spanish government had surrendered to the American government, but the Spanish families would never surrender their right of privacy to the American families.

And now, she—Charlotte—by nagging at him until he had taken alarm, had at the same time succeeded in impressing herself on his mind as a sort of old man of the sea, perched for time on his shoulders. By helping him she had lost her own chance. She had put herself down as of the coarsened Americans who saw evil instead of beauty in this little city which was of the East and of the West, which was old in its beauty as in its evil, and which would always seem to her a nightmare and to Tom Vernay a dream of those nights when one is happy.

It had been by accident that she had heard of Saulsbury's having turned, as the soldiers put it, "squaw man." She had not been surprised. Saulsbury's fresh-coloured face

was the face of a man for whom it had been merely a question of *some* native woman. The one at whom Charlotte had been scandalized had been herself: for she had to such an extent absorbed the sly hints of liaisons with which her young pupils impregnated the school that she had at once grasped and understood about Saulsbury and Josefa. It had been the little Pio:

"But, *señorita*, if I now wear my Sunday clothes to school it iss because my sister has now *mucho dinero*! Her *amante* iss one varry reech *Americano*—oh, varry, varry reech! He it iss who builds the new houses that shall not fall down in typhoons. Therefore, I wear Sunday clothes to school, *señorita*! Why not? Every day, I now get *poco más dinero*!"

And he strutted around the schoolyard bare of grass and bare of decency with its mixture of the sexes in this precocious land of the devil—Charlotte said to herself.

Saulsbury, she noticed, was proud of himself. He was preening himself that, in his affair with Josefa, he was following in the footsteps of all sophisticated white men in the tropics, and was correspondingly elated at his adaptability. It never occurred to him to keep his affair dark. He had in his new walk, which swaggered unnecessarily for even a prosperous builder in a typhoon land, the conviction that he knew he had broadened, had grown under the influence of travel and the process of seeing the world, into a gay dog and a true citizen of that world.

Charlotte said to herself: "It's the empty sexual boasting of the callow male from a small town. *He* thinks that he

is becoming what he'd insist the Spaniards openly were—and what I'll bet they openly were *not*. Didn't that fat Spanish woman at the shop on the Escolta—I know I got it right, for I was standing next her at the counter when she was gossiping with her wheezy friend—didn't she say that she was never sorry when she heard of some native girl getting into what is called *trouble*, because when a native woman so contrived, by good management, to get into this sort of trouble she thereby got a lift in the world of her own people by her connection with a white man? Truly, it was surprising, she went on, that the shrewd Americans could not see it that way, when they—the Spaniards—knew it so well. But (she looked like a field marshal when she laid down her rulings) a Spanish gentleman would of course have kept his illicit love affair from the eyes of the world. Dick Saulsbury is all wrong. But then, I'm not at all sure in my own mind that he is a gentleman; and there's the trouble."

Josefa, flaunting prosperity, had once or twice come to the school to fetch her little brother and to impress the persons who came to fetch the other little brothers and sisters—Charlotte was sure that brothers and sisters came in batches of six or eight, like guinea pigs—and Josefa in finery suggested abandon when in poverty. For Charlotte saw that none of her new riches had been spent on stockings. Her chinelas hung loosely on bare feet; and above the chinelas and brown legs was a starched froth of white ruffles—petrified sea-foam—and above the white ruffles her violently plaided skirt with its long bell-shaped tail. The belled tail

was always looped over her arm when she entered the school-room; but she let it down until its red-and-yellow checker-board pattern flared along the floor. She would arrange it along the floor, and settle her *camisa de chino*, and shrug up her stiffly starched *pañuella* to form a picture frame for her head which shone with coco-nut oil, and for her sleek pale-brown face with its skin too tight for the size of her opaque black eyes with their sparse lashes. Josefa always wore behind one ear a cluster of *Sampaguita*; and she was always soaked with extract of *Frangipani* which did not mingle pleasantly with the heavy perfume of the *Sampaguita*.

"The fool!" Charlotte would say to herself. But she did not mean Josefa. Since yesterday, when the *Dos Hermanos* had told her of *Estéban Perez*, she had not been able to reason herself out of a pity for that young person who so light-heartedly flaunted her new clothes. The *Dos Hermanos* had said—she could remember their words very clearly now that the shock was over—they had said, speaking as was their habit with one accord:

"Did the *señorita* not know of *Estéban Perez*? He iss the what-you-call-it young man of this Josefa, on whom she spends *mucho dinero*. He iss very sly, iss *Estéban*. He has just come back from where *General Aguinaldo* iss in retreat in the country. It seems, *señorita*, that the great *General Aguinaldo* very greatly snubbed *Estéban*, telling this *cochinero* that he, the *General*, would keep his word to the so good *Americanos* not to meddle with politics. That *Estéban* was angry! He and Josefa said that the *General* has now become imbecile—that he iss taking his beating

like a white man instead of like a Malay. They are saying around Manila that never again will they applaud the music of 'The Aguinaldo March'—although, as the march has been forbidden to military bands on the Luneta by the pig-dog Americanos (the *señorita* will of course understand that we are merely repeating the evil words of Estéban and Josefa, and that we ourselves, the Dos Hermanos, would not use words of so unfriendly a character) they had, up to now, shrieked and stamped and called out *Evora!* But to cheer a march written to honour a man who could take a military reverse like a white man? They'll see themselves frying in oil first! Oh, yees! That iss what those two have said; and many persons in Manila could tell the *señorita* that it iss so!"

Charlotte, through becoming disgusted at the little brown sister, was now also in a fair way to sing with the soldiers that "*he ain't no brother of mine!*"

Josefa, the Dos Hermanos had said, was mestiza. They wished to hint—they continued—that the Spaniards, who employed the Mestizas as servants, never trusted them: for is not a mixture of bloods very bad for the loyalty? They—the Dos Hermanos, God be praised!—are all Filipino, and therefore should be listened to by the *señorita* who iss a friend of the Coronel at the Cuartel de España.

And the false Josefa, decked out in Saulsbury's gifts, had stood there on the banquetta before Tom Vernay and herself, and had yowled about the necessity of raising money for losses at a most disastrous cock-fight—engineered, doubtless, by the Evil One who had it in for her because she had

always been a good woman—at which Estéban Perez had lost heavily. Her moans of self-pity, accompanied by shrewd glances, had caused Tom Vernay acute embarrassment; but the passers-by, taking to the gutter in order to get past them, had scarcely paused for a glance of curiosity. It was, evidently, a common enough scene—a native girl in tears before an obdurate white man.

“Estéban—” she had lamented—“the *pobre hombre!* With his face so marred by smallpox that no one but I who am faithful will love him; and with one of his eyes crooked from the evil eye of some sinful one upon his mother! *Señor Teniente*—for the love of the Mother of God—*poco dinero* for Estéban?”

Charlotte thought about it all that long and dreadfully warm day, with the children droning like insects and the noises of the street mingling with their drone, and the heat rolling in at the open windows to augment the heat that was already in the room. Her head ached, ached dreadfully, and she felt that if the school day did not soon come to its end she would burst into a droning yell of protest. Droning: the whole world was a droning mess of the not to be borne!

The street, when she at last reached it, was not to be borne. Coney Island in the tropics. The shutters of the shops were coming down after the siesta hour; and from the houses were issuing forth women whose business would be livelier by night. That was the trouble with the districts up behind San Miguel. Tom Vernay might be seeing the pictures of the *Intramuros*, might be hearing the poetry of

the Ylang Ylang trees along the crooked streets; but she was condemned to the drone of life which hid behind pictures and poetry. The drone of sin and of squalour. Women smiling at men—putting their fans before their faces and peeping around the fans, with wiles which had not been taught them but had been born in them from generations behind lamps whose light was red. The red lamps, Charlotte knew, would later on be lit behind many of the windows that she was passing. These girls who now switched through the streets would, a few hours along in the night, be lifting their sleek black heads above their window-sills; they would be gazing at passing men from underneath half-closed lids, and sweeping the red blossoms of the hibiscus back and forth over their lips. Savage charm in the unwinking stares under those drooping lids.

“Who could get away from it?” Saulsbury had said in a burst of candour. “The tactics of the hot lands, Charlotte! That night when she got me—it was the Spanish baile—Carnival last year. We beat it. Went off by ourselves, Josefa and I, who are not Spanish. You don’t make allowances for men, Charlotte; you’re so cold, and all that, you women from home! You don’t understand how these little devils—these *real* little devils!—can work on a man. But I’ll tell you this: don’t let any little brother come out here until you get him safely married. And I’d advise that you get him married to a black-haired woman, at that: or she’ll be cut out by these juicy brunettes on the market.”

She had seen Saulsbury dancing with Josefa on a night that was not the night of the Spanish baile. A few Ameri-

can women, with attendant husbands, stood looking on; and Charlotte had stood with the Jenningses and had watched Saulsbury when he circled past them. The floor was thick with dancers of many colours and many degrees of excellence. The girls, for the most part, were Mestizas; and as they had danced, clinging to their partners in soldier khaki and sailor white, or Filipinos with their shirt-tails out, they had shown marvelous dexterity with their loose chinelas. Prehensile toes inside those chinelas, clinging to the soles, curling up and holding the backless mules in place. They hopped, they skipped, and still the chinelas followed the toes with never a parting of company. With the losing of a chinela the girls would have lost prestige.

Saulsbury had not been hopping and skipping; he had waltzed in a fashion as languorous as the music, as the warm night, as the moonlight which had streamed down and dimmed the light from the gaudy lanterns that were strung over the Carnival Grounds. Wallace Field—Anglo-Saxon name for equatorial scene of carousal! Saulsbury had had to bend his tall frame in order to hold the little brown creature in his arms; but their lips were very close, and in Saulsbury's pleasant, prominent blue eyes was the half-stupefied look of a man who had been at stronger drink than that served in bodegas. Charlotte had been sickened. Saulsbury's face, in the mixed light from the lanterns and the moon and the stars which were golden in the hot dark sky, had been so blond, so pink-and-white—and to see a pink-and-white face lean close enough to kiss a pale-brown face had been rather dreadful.

The dance music had stopped for the musicians to get new breath and for the dancers to wander off behind groups of palms that had been arranged to thickly shelter the benches around the roofless pavilion. Dick Saulsbury and the girl had separated; and from where the Jenningses and Charlotte stood with the lookers-on, the healthy pink-and-white of the man's face stood out above a match that he had struck. For the moment he had looked ashamed. Charlotte had watched him, hopeful at that look of shame. She was plying her own fan, but not with languor; she was fanning with fury, in gusts that lifted the hair from her forehead and agitated the filmy scarf that she wore around her shoulders; she would never do anything—she was reminding herself—in the way that these pale-brown girls did things. She had her teeth firmly clenched together as she reminded herself of this determination; and her fan flew back and forth in its little arc, and the wind that it raised disarranged her hair and her scarf, and she did not care. It was better, she thought, to have gone on top of the Wall as Tom Vernay had done; at least he had looked high, and from high places.

"You will get the money soon, for I have the American on the hook!"

The voice, speaking the Tagalog that her school experience was teaching her, had come from behind one of the palm groupings. Charlotte, curious to see how many Americans had been got on the hook this Carnival night, had tried to peer through the dense, coarse leaves. Josefa, apparently speaking to the empty air; for only a distant, slinking man's

figure could Charlotte see. Josefa whirled back to the dancing floor, her bright eyes searching among the blond men who were returning with their off-colour partners to that again moving, shifting mass of the tightly clutched.

"Let's get away!" had said Mrs. Jennings in her ear. "A little of Carnival goes a long way—and I've got confetti down my back, and as I'm hot it sticks. I'll have spots of blue and red and green all over me."

The three of them had walked slowly up the moonlit Bagumbayan. And in front of them, cutting in from shrieking Wallace Field, went a couple. Impossible to mistake that tall, full form which was already growing fat. The girl who clung to his arm had to prance along on her tip-toes.

"So he's turned native," had said Mrs. Jennings. "I'm not surprised. I could have told you he was just that kind. They've got it stamped on them from the time they sail out of the Golden Gate. They're always licking their lips when the rest of the people on the ship mention the dangers of the hot countries."

Thank fortune, *that* Carnival was over and done with! But was it done with? Dick Saulsbury had turned squaw man as a consequence.

Other things were done with, and behind. Here was Charlotte, walking home from school because she could not afford a calesa, and sorry for Josefa instead of condemning her without compunction. She was sorry for Josefa to-day, because Josefa was in love with the cross-eyed Estéban, was trying in her own way to assist Estéban.

VI

THE rainy season came in with its joke of many sudden buckets of water emptied on the city which had been sweltering. It rained every morning as Charlotte went to school; it cleared off so that the sun could send the steam from wet pavements into the crowded schoolroom and force additional buckets of perspiration from human beings who sat in that room and chanted lessons through flat noses; it rained again as she started home every afternoon. There is system about the rainy season; the rain comes and goes on schedule, making you realize the merits and demerits of its fall and its cessation. When it is falling down on you, or hitting the roof of what house you have taken refuge in, you think that you will scream if it does not stop so that your ears can rest. When it has given way to the sun—and steam rises from the pavements, from the garden soil, from the drenched bushes and dripping trees, and ascends to the white sky in columns of moisture that you can see—you think that if the rain would start again you could bear it better. But you cannot bear either, as you know by the time that one month of it has hysterically gone by. You think about it at nights when you ought to be asleep and, instead of sleeping, you are tossing around your sticky bed hunting for a dry spot on the sheet. You cannot sleep for knowing that when you get up in the morning you will find your shoes covered with mildew that stands an

inch high, and filled with mildew that makes it hard to force in your stockinged feet. You smell mildew all day, and your hands—your fevered but sticky hands—touch mildew; and your skin crawls.

The centipedes have, with unanimity, moved into the houses; the lizards who do not like wet feet have been joined by those lizards who like the wet but who are prudently hunting dry homes for their young; the cockroaches are perpetuating their species, and the jungle is forcing its growth. The beauty, the horror, the chilliness of the terror in the air is through the day and the night. You decide that the steady sun, which had blazed on you and had given you a lightness in the head and had cooked your brains, is necessary after all. When the friendly sun fails to blaze outside, within the casita is the terror of unhealthiness that you do not understand if you are white and in exile. You do not know what is the matter with you; you shiver, and turn colder and colder, and the next minute you burn up. You crouch on your bed, underneath all the blankets you can find, and you are so stiflingly hot that you cannot bear it, but you know that your teeth will chatter if you come out of your lair. The chilly damp, following the heat, is bad for white men.

Worse for white women.

Charlotte, when she pulled herself out of bed, could see through her window that the typhoon signal was flying in the Plaza Moriones. She did not need the sight of that signal flag: she could see from the scuttling sky that the typhoon was hard at the heels of the signal. Skirting around Manila,

lashing the Bay into foam—she had seen it before, and it had lost its zest but retained its power of enragement. She knew that when she left the house she would meet, in the streets that were flues for the wind, officers flapping along in their violently yellow and atrociously smelly Hongkong slickers. Their campaign hats would be dropping water down their necks and putting out their after-breakfast cigars and cigarettes, and it would not occur to them to curse their Regulations forbidding umbrellas to officers in uniform. Charlotte began to laugh derisively as she thought of this, and stopped laughing when she remembered that although many things about the Army were silly, *they* were never lonely, never all by themselves in a queer country, never homesick, because they were used to moving their homes.

It was extra hard to get through that day. The native children had discarded most of their American clothes because if they had worn them they would have got them wet. And the heated moisture of the room brought from the coco-nut oil on their furlike hair a rancid smell. The windows of American glass had to stay closed because of the rain that beat against them; and the rain ran down the panes and made them opaque. She had to stand the coco-nut oil which was more rancid than she had ever before noticed it to be.

She would hurry home when school closed. It would be comforting, in a way, to be shivering and shaking in bed, and so have Tom Vernay's affairs taken out of her hands.

All calesas, carromatas, quelises, had taken to cover. The street of the school was empty. She stood for a while

under the roof of the rain. Water was working through her wide-brimmed native hat. She knew that the pink dye of the hat was streaming down her forehead. The rain came down to her head—to within a few inches of her nose, so that she feared in another minute it would so encase her in its dense compactness that she could not breathe.

She felt fear of what would happen to her ears when that volume of water should close in on them. It was solid—this water which was so close to her head, dropping its broken fragments on her hat, getting ready to descend in the heaviness of its mass. It was not new to her—this trick of the rain driving so swiftly before the center of the storm that it cannot fall to the ground; driving straight, while for a long time the ground stays dry beneath. She stood and looked along the dry ground, with the rain in a shed-like formation above; and far away she could see, beyond the shed of the rain-mass, the black clouds as a canopy to cut the world from Heaven. Clouds as densely black, as wedged together, as the rain that could not detach itself and fall to the ground in drops.

She was shivering. She knew that she was shivering not so much from the chill in the air as from the fear that went with the chill. Fear of Nature. That was what she had got from these years so close to Nature. Grandeur: yes. But it was the grandeur of Lucifer when he was no longer Son of the Morning. There was menace in the grandeur, and a taunt that the grandeur still existed, would always exist, and that it was bigger than a human creature.

She was so thankful, when she at last caught a calesa,

that she sank down into its aproned interior and began to weep. The drive through the streets—cooped up behind that apron which was buttoned tightly across her chest, pinning her arms in dryness and leaving her face bare to the drive of the wind with the rain on its breath—seemed the transition between life as she had known it and life as she was to find it in the future. The rain, at last falling hard, began to hit upon the apron as if weather-boys were playing marbles. The drops were big as marbles. They hit the ground with hatred, and made dents in the thick mud they were mixing from the blackish plaster-of-Paris of streets which yesterday had been baked and cracked. It seemed to her that never before had she seen rain. But she knew that, because it was now falling, the typhoon had blown out to sea. The ground was a churning mass of black mud upon which beat the large, heavy drops of this dreadful rain. Under her feet was black mud; up above her head was black atmosphere; and caught in between the two planes of blackness was a world of black people. Panic worked into her head. Why had she thought that she could adjust herself, and her white notions, and her white morals to this world?

The cochero's bare splay feet were being pelted by the rain marbles, and he shifted his position and put his feet inside the apron, driving now over his shoulder, now whirling—knocking against her—to shout insults to his labouring horse.

"Mano, sen of a cow without a father!" the cochero ranted mirthfully, winking at Charlotte and belabouring the

sodden horse with his long-lashed whip. The lash of the whip flicked moisture at the moisture of the houses on either side of the street.

The clouds, as she peered from the calesa in her wish to touch the world, were not scudding before the wind as clouds that she had known had scudded affrightedly. These clouds had gathered slowly, secretively, with an effect of such massed movement that they did not have to hurry to produce their impression of the inevitable. These were clouds such as she had never dreamed of before she came out to the Islands; as the sun, when it shone, was a sun that in its pitiless glare she had never before seen. So far she had not yielded to the new and the horrible—this old and horrible that was new to her—but this afternoon she made her concession to Nature: she closed her eyes.

How long had it been—she let her thoughts wander—since she had dropped into this odd existence of a cramped and buttoned-up calesa, this half-way house to Heaven or Hell, this mildewed smell inside the calesa and outside the continuous rain which was mixing the earth and sky? She tried to see, above the apron, the street names on the corner houses; but the torrents of rain swept between her and the signs that she strained her eyes to read. She grew confused. She was in a city, and she could not see it because the storm had let loose upon it the evil powers of the jungle. In the writhing sheet of water that enclosed her and shut her off from all that she had known, that was giving her an insight into things which she had never acknowledged, there might be the writhing snakes of another

world. Was she being whirled through an intermediate stage between worlds? Or was there a horse in front which was bearing her to what was now her home? She could not see the little beast who was doing this racing work of dragging the calesa; the rain-sheets hung between her and its whisking tail; but she knew of that whisking because occasionally the wet hairs of the thin and neglected tail whipped above the apron and across her tense face. There was no hope left of a destination, as there was no distance in this rain which was coming down in a solid mass with no vistas through its drops like marbles. Manila rain is like the curtain of a theatre which drops down and shuts the play off from the audience: until the curtain rises there is no play. Charlotte tried in this way to joke with her instinct of fear. She knew that she felt fear and she tried not to think that it was inspired by the black, soaked, churning earth in its primeval strength. It was the rain that was chilling her to the bone, she told herself; it was the chill that was causing her to shiver. She would not acknowledge that she was being degraded into fear of the elements. But she was so far demoralized that she acknowledged a greater truth: she said to herself that she would rather it had been these men with their shirt-tails out, these little brown people whom she had thought to uplift, who had undermined her dauntlessness.

In her peering out from behind the apron she saw Vernay. There was no mistaking that it was Vernay, although the man on the banquetta was going in the same direction as the

calesa and had his back to her as he scudded before the wind; for the wind had wrapped his dripping "slicker" around his legs, had plastered it to his shoulders, had turned its yellow ugliness into transparency. She beat on the cocher's back and screamed at him to stop the ambling of the horse.

"Where are you going?" she continued her scream and directing it at Vernay.

"Nowhere!"

Charlotte screamed: "Get in here and I'll take you."

Vernay made a gesture of impatience, of resignation mingled with the impatience. He made no move to draw nearer. She saw that his face was strained. She leaped from the calesa. The tarpaulin apron had been the cocher's concession to style; she was as wet as if she had walked. In her dripping linen frock she stood beside Vernay in his dripping slicker. She looked around and saw that they were in one of the narrow streets of the Walled City, and hastened to pay off her cocher. She could get no wetter.

Vernay said nothing as she stood and looked at him. She touched his arm to jerk him out of his drawn abstraction. She was glad when he finally spoke, although he was scowling at her.

"You should have kept your *calesa*," was what he said.

She was glad that she had not kept the calesa. There was something about the flatness of his tone which worried her.

"What has happened?" she asked him.

"I don't know," he replied, no colour in his voice. "That's the trouble: I don't know." Flat: his soul was flat.

"Have you seen—her—lately?" she persisted.

Vernay shrugged his dripping shoulders. "How could I, in this rain?"

She had not thought of that. Her heart leaped in thankfulness, and she reproached herself.

"It's been hell—" he was muttering. "I shouldn't have listened to her—I never ought to have listened to her, when she said we must wait. She said we must wait until her parents got more used to the Americans. I ought to have known that she was wrong. I ought to have gone right to them and said that we meant to marry, no matter what they thought of it."

"You had to listen to her," Charlotte consoled him. "You didn't know what sort of people her parents were—you couldn't go on your own hook."

"It made me feel off-colour! You know? As if I weren't behaving as a gentleman should behave. As if I weren't protecting her. If it's all come out, now—and it must have come out, I feel in my bones that it's come out—her father must be raising Cain with her! Just think what a father back home would be doing!"

"A father back home," interrupted Charlotte, "would be swearing that he'd put a bullet through you, and he wouldn't do a thing besides sending for you and seeing if you could support a wife."

But Vernay did not laugh as she had hoped he would.

She thought that he seemed to be a little boy in a strange land, and wanting his mother.

"Don't you see—" he was continuing—"that this will convince him the Americans are just what he has probably been thinking them? That he'll say we have no breeding?" And he went on to prove that Charlotte had been right in her conjecture about his wanting his mother. "I know what *my* mother would say to *me*!"

The rain was streaming down on them, but he made no move to walk along the street. He laid his hand on the wet wall of the house outside which they were standing.

There was something that she must ask him.

"Are you sure that Dolores herself would marry you?"

He turned to face her. He looked straight into her eyes, and she struggled to keep them from being pitying.

"Yes," he said positively, "yes, she would marry me, and they would let her marry me . . . if I were not an officer in the army that whipped them."

"You *wouldn't* resign?" she said to her fear.

Vernay shook his head. But she got the impression that he shook it at something besides her words. He shook it with something that was not denial. She shivered, and drew her wet frock up around her neck for comfort. All that Vernay said was, "There's nothing I wouldn't do to get her! And I'm not happy, anyway—as it is. . . ."

She noticed that again she was beating her hands together.

Vernay said: "I've had a feeling of dread the last few

days. Ever since the rains started it's almost driven me crazy. . . . Look here!"

She looked where his hand lay against the wall of the house. She had not noticed that they were standing outside the Casa Ayala. The house was frowning. Every pore of its pink stucco which was streaked with the rain was closed to him. Upon that now mildewing stucco was a placard of sale.

"I came here—" Vernay was saying—"to get in! I am going to find out what is the matter!"

He lifted one of the knockers and brought it down with a crash of brass that echoed through the deserted street.

"Wait a minute!" Charlotte exclaimed, catching his hand. "What are you going to say?"

"I am going to tell them what I mean to do."

One half of the door was opening, slowly, forbidding in its deliberation.

"They are trying to skin out," Vernay was saying. "The Dos Hermanos told me that they had hurried and sold at a sacrifice all their hemp lands and the *hacienda*. They wouldn't have done that unless——"

The half of the door was now sufficiently wide open to permit a head being thrust forth. In Spanish that halted as if he had just learned to speak it, he tried to make enquiries of the grinning muchacho who leered from beneath his stiff Tagalog pompadour; but the boy withdrew the bare foot with which he had been propping the heavy door. The door closed upon his toothy "*No sabe!*"

"But wait! Wait!" Vernay cried, giving way to panic.

"Come!" Charlotte said. "They are not going to open it again."

"No," he said, heavily. "No. They won't open it until I do what I must do."

"Look here!" suggested Charlotte. She spoke persuasively, as she spoke to her school children. "You'd better come to my place and talk it out, Tom."

He now shivered almost as much as she was shivering. She recalled the tales that she had heard, and on this dreary afternoon it did not seem so improbable that demonios could be called out of the jungle to set fevers on a man—fevers to be cured by none except the jungle doctors, the Babalyánes. They came in the dead of night, the demonios. . . . But Vernay shook off her hand.

"I'm all right!" he said impatiently. "But I mean to find out what has caused this."

Charlotte said: "You knew all along that you could not get in."

"Of course I knew that! I just tried it on the impulse of the moment. But I do know that they've locked Dolores up; I am sure of that much or else she'd have come to the Wall, rain or no rain. I've gone up there every afternoon," he finished drearily.

The rain was coming down with its hint that it would continue to so fall for eternity. They stood in a drowned street. Dogs of mongrel breed ran furtively, their tails between their legs. Charlotte was seized by an exasperation at the rain, and at the dampness that was making her voice shake as she tried to brace him up. What good was a voice

like this, when a man was down and out and needed a woman's soothing?

"This town is getting us both," she started. She knew that she was throwing it at him starkly, to hold to his breast like a hair shirt, and she was sorry; and into the clear look of reproach she had turned upon him she tried to force a bright expectation of future triumph. "That's the only thing that is the matter: we've made mistakes in our determination to get what we are *really* after." She stopped, confused.

The silence which made itself felt as a continuation of her speech was throughout the deserted street. It forced her to some step—a step that she felt a dread of taking unless it could be made a physical step only. She walked along the banquetta and around the next corner, and stood waiting. She felt a terror that he would not follow her and a determination that he should.

She was not surprised when he came around the corner; she had been sure that what he needed, in order to move away from the Casa Ayala, was the strong will of someone else. He stood beside her and looked back along the street that they had left. A carabao, undeterred by the shafts of the cart to which he was attached, was lying down for a nap; his example was at once followed by the driver, who became invisible except for bare feet which protruded from the suale roof of the cart.

Charlotte's smile was slow, as she pointed to the carabao; she turned fully upon Vernay the coolness of her eyes over which she had gained control. She said:

"I don't take a change of plans that way. Lying down, I mean." She spoke crisply.

And then she knew that she had made a mistake, and she was aghast; for Vernay said:

"Did you think that I was going to take it lying down? Well, I'm not! I'm going to get busy doing the only thing that I *can* do to get her!"

VII

SHE did not try to go along with him or to induce him to come home with her. She ran the rest of the short way toward the house in which she knew that Ellen would be already dry and warm and ready for gossip. There would be blankets to huddle under; and Ellen would make her drink scalding tea, and would tell her that she was idiotic to have wasted time after she was wet through. Ellen always reminded her that she did not understand the insidious ways of the tropics. . . . And, as she remembered that Ellen would say this, she realized that she did not want to see anyone until she had got her face under control. She stopped short, in the rain, and wondered where she could go to escape people. She imagined that she was crying; although when she put her hand up to her cheeks they were so wet with rain that she could not be sure the rain had been helped by tears. It might be that only her heart was weeping.

She was back again before the Casa Ayala. And as she got there, and saw that a man in a yellow slicker was on the banquetta a few yards down the street, she told herself that she had known Tom Vernay would have returned too. She had come back to see Tom Vernay again. She had not been able to shake him off, as she had thought that she could shake him out of her thoughts if she used common sense. They stood still and looked at each other. And then she

heard an impatient, smothered oath, and knew that he resented her having followed him back.

There were more people in the street, for the rain was now falling in civilized fashion. As they stood, staring at each other and wondering what to say—she knew that he was wondering what to say to her, and how to get rid of her, as she was wondering how she could turn away for a second time and leave him—there came a clatter and a roaring of machinery from around the corner. The cut-out of some great car was insulting the returning peace and quietude of the Walled City. The car took a long time to get around the corner; and in that interval the rain entirely ceased and the sun came out and began to bake the Walled City. It could not be so late in the afternoon as she, shut up in the calesa, had thought it to be; for from the pavement there began to rise that unmistakable shimmer of early afternoon heat in the tropics which, once seen, is seen ever after in bad dreams. Charlotte shrank into the shade of the media agua of the locked and barred Casa Ayala, and was thankful for this meagre hospitality.

The big car, with much manœuvring between the two rows of buildings which were so close to each other, had got around the corner. It came charging toward them and, with a loud exclamation from its police driver, veered to make room for the carabao cart. One wheel of the automobile ran up the elevation of the banquetta. The driver rattled brakes and swore. Policemen got out of the back and ran to help. Charlotte watched them, glad of anything that could make her laugh.

"They're trying to make the *banquetta* get out of their way, Tom!" she cried; and giggled. She knew that this funereal black cage was the latest improvement in Manila, which had begun to brag on its Black Maria motor cars. She wanted to shriek with laughter over something to get her mind off the fact that she was embarrassed by Vernay's silence.

The prisoners in the Black Maria were smiling broadly at having got a free ride in an automobile. They were pressing their faces against the bars, and peering out, and shouting advice to the driver. The white policemen were putting the flat of their ex-soldier hands against the grinning faces; and the brown and yellow faces came back as soon as the hands were removed. One of these faces, a man's, was pock-marked. The man seemed indifferent to his ill looks, as was the woman who sat close to him and openly put her arm around his neck as they both saw Vernay and screamed at him.

"Look!" whispered Charlotte. "That's Josefa!"

Josefa, her thick-lipped mouth spreading all over her smooth cream face, sidled closer to the pock-marked man, shrugged her shoulders beneath her pañuella that even in the Black Maria had not lost its freshness, and shouted with laughter and vituperation nicely mixed. Charlotte understood her to be saying that she would give Vernay back his so-filthy dinero for the meetings on the Wall, except that she had already given it to a better man—a man who was not a God-damned Americano.

"*Ai!* That Saulsbury he *keeck* me out, he say he have me

ar-r-r-rested when I bring Estéban to beg that he help us! May the fiends take him over when he gets to Hell! I have prayed the Virgin that he go to Hell! I have spent the last of his money on candles to the Mother of Sorrows that she will intercede for me and see to it that he lands in Hell!" She flung both arms around the skinny neck of her Estéban, and looked over his shoulder to scream her last words directly into Vernay's face. "But I have done better than the candles—powerful as is the Mother of God! I—Josefa—I have scraped heem with a knife—so——!"

"Don't have no words with her, Loot'nant," interrupted the driver of the Black Maria. "She's a bad egg. She's in the jug for knifin' some cit. This *hombre* here—" the driver, who was now back on his box, kicked in the direction of the pock-marked Estéban—"he was mixed up with it some way; he don't look none too good, with that cock eye!"

Charlotte and the native woman were confronting each other. Josefa was smoking furiously at a long cigar. She blew smoke through her nose and then through her mouth, and kept her head encircled by a thin cloud of blue misty vapour. This made it easier for her fellow-prisoners; the odour of the cheap tobacco went far toward killing the less strong but more revolting odour of the coco-nut oil which made her black hair so glossy and smooth and compactly wooden. Josefa's sense of humour was in full fling. As the driver went on to volunteer the details of Saulsbury's charge against her, she fixed her eyes on Vernay and screamed cheerfully at him. Her high voice broke through the chugging of the engine and the reopening of the cut-out. She

said that she had had an amazing time when she had gone to this friendly teacher who had come to her mother's bailes. She had told the Señorita Carson of how the big cochinero of a Saulsbury had deserted her.

"There are no great ladies among you *Americanos!*" yelled Josefa, above the cut-out. "She said—the Señorita Carson—'Oh, poor Josefa!'"

The exquisite humour of this carried Josefa down the street in spasms of mirth.

The first thing that flashed through Charlotte's mind was the reflection that Dick Saulsbury had proven himself to be a blunderer. White men, out here, could not afford liaisons with native girls; they could not afford knife fights with those girls; and they blundered when they had the girls arrested. . . . But what had this girl done before scraping Saulsbury with a knife? Her mind leaped to it.

Vernay stood pale and silent on the banquetta. His frowning gaze turned to the Casa Ayala, which frowned back at him. She touched him on the arm. "How was it that Josefa was arrested in this neighbourhood?"

Vernay shook himself from his abstraction of frowning, and bent upon her a new frown that was personal in its animosity. When he spoke it was indifferently. "Saulsbury moved into the Intramuros not long ago: didn't you know?" was all that he told her.

It rushed over her that Dick Saulsbury had been a very light-hearted companion during those days on the Transport; and that the three of them had tackled the "joke" together. The joke was turning out to be on each of the three; and for

that reason she was sorry for Dick Saulsbury, alone in a hospital and scraped with Josefa's knife. Dick Saulsbury had started out with merry blue eyes. She hated to think of those frivolous eyes staring from a cot in the hospital—staring, and wondering how he had happened to get into a fix like this.

"I am going to find out where they took him. . . . They must have taken him to the Army Hospital; there's no other where a white man could be taken, is there?" She was looking urgently at Vernay, hinting with her fixity of look that he should take the matter out of her hands. She was the girl of the three who had come out to tackle Manila. But she knew, as she spoke, that Vernay would not hunt Dick up. She changed to, "I suppose there is nothing to be done about it."

She tried to shake herself from her abstraction. She had been gazing for so long at a spot down the street—a spot made by no object, but formed, in the wriggling steam rising from the wet pavement, by the continued focus of her eyes—that she seemed powerless to look away. Her eyes felt crossed from looking for so long at that spot which was nothing. It cost her an effort ridiculously great to turn her eyes upon the person who had joined them. She had to get a new focus in order to bring this new person down to life-size; and then she was annoyed that the new focus had been overdone and had brought the person down too far; and then she laughed at Paraiso. But not with him; Paraiso, as usual, was not laughing. He had been swinging on to Vernay's hand, which was hanging idly; and as she laughed he let the hand go, stood

upright with his heels together and his own hands at his sides, palms front. His unwinking gaze took her in for a moment before it turned again to Vernay. Paraiso was evidently seriously disturbed. He began to talk with excitement. He rolled his mournful eyes and gesticulated with both hands and his shoulders, and told the Teniente his friend that his sister was of a surety again locked in her room.

"She is weeping with great gusto," he added.

Charlotte glanced at the grimly closed house and wondered if she had best go away and let Vernay wave to Dolores' window—or whatever else he might wish to do; and realized that in the palazzo type of house it was the windows of living-rooms which looked on the street.

Vernay had made a sound that Paraiso evidently took to be a groan, for he went on to reassure his friend. He said:

"It is with great anger that she weeps." He had so far gone against his ethics as to ask through the keyhole for this information.

Charlotte, restless, looked at her new wrist-watch which she had got at a military outfitting shop because it kept good time. She was dining with the Jenningses at the Army and Navy Club; and there was a limit to what she was willing to do in the way of hanging around the streets with Tom Vernay who was mooning. But Vernay turned to her.

"Don't go!" he said urgently. "I may want you to help me."

"There is nothing I can do," she replied coldly.

But she made no further move to go. Paraiso was talk-

ing, and her tired eyes again began to feel a vacant fixity as she looked at him.

"And when will your sister get out of her room?" Vernay asked Paraiso.

The child shrugged indifferently. "When we sail, I think. She has done things that have made my mamma and the *padre* do *mucho hablar*. She has sinned in some way, so that it seems necessary to my mamma to get her to the good *España* as soon as possible and marry her to that man who will throw his hands into the air. My mamma sits in the hall outside the keyhole that leads to Dolores' room and talks to her; and as her voice is very loud with anger I can hear every word, although I think it is my duty not to listen. You know, *señor*? Is it not improper to listen to what is not meant for your ears?"

"Oh, damn!" Vernay muttered.

"My mamma tells Dolores that she will not be happy otherwise than married to this man."

"Look here . . ." interrupted Vernay; and then gave it up and stood silent.

"Josefa got the *caliente cabeza* and rushed into the house—the first day of the rains; and she screamed very loudly, so that old Manuella and I heard as we were going through the *sala*. She said that *los Americanos* were *steengie*—very *steengie* with the money bags toward the women. She said that the officers were the most *steengie*: which I knew to be a lie, *señor*. For did you not give me of that *dulce* which burns the *estómago*?" Paraiso meditatively rubbed his nose.

"Go on!" said Vernay.

"My mamma made that noise she makes down in her throat, and said to Dolores, 'You see?' But I do not know what she meant Dolores to see, *señor*." He came to a full stop.

Charlotte again glanced at her watch. Five o'clock. Dinner at seven; and she had to go home and take a bath underneath that abominable Standard Oil can.

Paraiso was laughing. She had never before heard the child laugh. He laughed like a wise old man who had no illusions. "She said to Josefa, 'You go to confession and see what the *padre* will do to *you*!' But it seems that Josefa went instead and cut up somebody with a little knife that she wears in her clothes: Manuella said so."

"Would you do something for your sister—something that would make her happy again and put a stop to that weeping to which you object?" Vernay had burst out.

"*Seguro*," announced Paraiso indifferently.

"Would you—if your sister asked it of you—would you get that key from your mother's oratory and unlock your sister's door?" persisted Vernay.

"Now, Tom——" began Charlotte.

But Vernay was not listening to her, and she stood uneasily by while Paraiso caught at the idea with what for him was enthusiasm. "I might be able to reach it," he speculated, "if I stood on the *priedieu*?"

"Tom——" Charlotte started again.

But Vernay was off down the street with Paraiso at his heels.

Charlotte hurried home to dress for dinner.

VIII

VERNAY was seated in a corner of the sala de comer, alone at his table and not noticing the gay company of the Jennings's dinner party. He was looking gloomily down at the food which the China boy placed before him. Charlotte could see his face from where she sat, and she wondered that she could so worry over the affairs of this immature, unreasoning boy. So she put it, in her mind, as she watched his uneaten dinner being removed course by course.

There was a pleasant little breeze blowing into the room. Soon it would rain again, and the little breeze would stop playing and blow angrily at them with cold aversion; China boys would run up ladders to pull the lanterns down from that immensely tall tree in the middle of the patio; the windows would be slid along in their grooves until the Club's guests were safe from the drive of the rain; and all romance would be washed from a dinner which would then turn into any dinner in any restaurant. The rainy season brought bad luck to the Americans. No one had come down with a fever; but fevers were not the worst of Manila's curses. This year the inroads of the rainy season were on the soil of the soul.

"Don't you think so?" a man's voice asked. The voice was directly at her right ear.

"Oh, yes!" she answered. It was the first time that she

had agreed with what Cootz thought of any subject; it was the first time that she had heard him commit himself on any subject; and she had not the remotest idea of what he thought was so: a China boy had brought a letter to Vernay. She moistened her lips. Vernay was signing his chit and was rising from his seat. He left the room.

The rain started.

Sounds on all sides of where she sat, waiting, her heart pounding.

"Now, Charlotte, you know that you *don't* think so!" Mrs. Jennings was trying to laugh off the cloud which hung over her dinner. "You know you never think that little Vernay can do wrong!"

Sounds in the rain, in the reverberations of its fusillade on the tiled roof. Sounds in the street—feet coming up, going past, never stopping. Why did none of the feet stop at the Club? There were feet coming to the Club—on their way to the Club—with evil intent toward Vernay: this, Charlotte's too tightly strung nerves told her. She thought that she could hear the twanging of those nerves. They made her voice, as she answered Mrs. Jennings, a high-pitched thing of metal.

"What has he done?" she was forcing herself to ask.

This was not a thing for the women to settle. Captain Jennings said:

"Resigned!"

Charlotte stupidly repeated:

"Resigned?"

"This afternoon. About six o'clock—or after; he came

around to my quarters to break the news to me that he'd just mailed his letter of resignation to the War Department. If he hadn't already mailed it, the young chump, I'd have argued him out of it. . . ."

"Tell what you said, as it was!" giggled Mrs. Jennings as she ate the good heart-of-palm salad.

"No use to go into that," was her husband's growl. "I wasted my breath, as he'd already mailed his letter. But I do hate to see a West Pointer make an ass of himself—show ingratitude to the government that educated him. If he'd been a civilian appointee it wouldn't have disappointed me so much; or a man who'd come up from the ranks. . . ." He glowered at Cootz, who turned red and fidgeted with his fork and tried to reply and could not. ". . . though a man from the ranks *will* stick it out, I'll say that for them," conceded Captain Jennings.

Cootz said:

"Yes, sir! They—we—stick it out!"

"I don't see why you were surprised, Henry," said Mrs. Jennings. "It's been coming on. You know it's been coming on."

Cootz agreed with her:

"Yes, ma'am, it's certainly been coming on!"

Charlotte tried to speak, and had as much trouble bringing out the words as Cootz had had a while back. She said:

"Maybe he can do something else better than he could have done *this* job."

She was ashamed that she could not have managed a more forceful defence. Why could not she have said, plainly,

what she suspected to be the underlying truth—a truth of which Vernay himself was ignorant—that his nature was opposed to the army legend? She had been knowing all the time, at the back of her head, that the few in the army who have the creative mind are the ones who go morbid. Tom Vernay should have had the scientific mind to fit in out here, and to weather the storm of three years of exile; the scientific mind sees in such a place as Manila the chance to exploit America's up-to-dateness. Why could she not have told them some of this which she knew? But all that she had said had been that weak "Maybe he can do something else better than he could have done *this* job.". . . Vernay was doing creative jobs all of this time. He had created a Manila of his own. He had created a Dolores of his own. . . . She tried to make herself hope—she did hope—that he would now "take possession of his house," as was the customary Spanish compliment upon the arrival of a guest. He had, to-day, finished building his house. . . .

Ban-n-n-n-g! Drum-m-m-m-m! . . . went the rain on the roof. A fife-and-drum corps of the elements. Military music—timed to the beat of the footfalls in the street. Footfalls that she could hear coming, with bad news, across the city to Vernay. She knew it. She could hear them—distinguish them from all the footfalls that meant nothing to Vernay. . . .

"*Bastante!* I can't stand this another minute!" Mrs. Jennings pushed back her chair, with a wince at its rasp on the bare floor. "Let's have coffee in the corridor: that ought to be quieter."

She ran her hand through Charlotte's arm as they left the table.

"I'm a mass of jerks to-night!" she apologized. "I liked that boy!"

They spoke of him as if he were dead. Charlotte shuddered, and wondered if it were the gusts of damp air blowing through the house; and shuddered again, and knew that it was because she was ill from a shock. . . . Mountains of emotion all around her. Even Mrs. Jennings was feeling the tension. And poor Tom was standing alone on his peak of emotion. There is room for only one pair of feet at the same time on the peak itself; but Tom, standing up there alone and watching Dolores with her slower feminine inflammability climb to catch up with him, did not realize the essential loneliness of great passion which is great pain of the spirit. Charlotte knew, but he did not. Could Dolores understand? She was too young, and too ignorant of every emotion save that of her religion. She could feel ecstasy of the spirit: Charlotte, even, had been caught up out of her cold reasoning of the One God, in these old churches with their tinsel and their incense and their droning padres with the good fat faces or the ascetic lean faces. . . . Was it possible that those who did not belong to the Church saw its beauties, its picturesqueness more clearly than those who had been born in it? . . .

Mrs. Jennings was whispering, with a shake in her voice: "This is a horrible part of the world! That boy would have stayed all right back home. Charlotte—you know, it scares me when I stop long enough to *think!*" She laughed

shrilly. "The answer is . . . don't stop long enough to think! Keep whistling in the dark!" She turned to the men who were following them. "*Come on! Let's dance!*"

But a China boy was standing beside Charlotte. He was murmuring something in her ear. He was speaking so that the others might not hear, and the words barely moved his thick lips and did not mark his inscrutable face. He said:

"*Teniente Vernay—around corner.*"

It was her own steps which were to sound in the corridor outside Tom Vernay's room.

He was waiting outside his closed door. His white lips would hardly let the words pass:

"Charlotte—will you help me out?"

"What have you done?" she asked.

"Paraiso came," he replied. "He came to my room just before dinner. He seemed to think that I had done something that I hadn't done."

She said:

"What *had* you done?"

She had to know this if she was to understand how to help him. Of course she would help him. . . .

Vernay looked at her: but he was not seeing her. She could tell. He said:

"What? . . . Paraiso—the poor little kid—got at me with one of the krisses that are hanging on my wall. The poor little kid! He—he cried when he saw that he wasn't strong enough to kill me! He actually wanted to kill me, Charlotte!"

Charlotte wanted to shake information out of him; and

she wanted to laugh and cry over Paraiso; and she ended by again asking, "What had you *done*?"

"What?"

She thought that he was bewildered through and through his mind.

"Why—I hadn't done a thing except send her a note. Didn't you see me go away with him? I went to the Club and wrote her a note. . . . But that isn't the point now. What you've got to help me about——"

"I can't help you when I don't know why you *want* me to help you!" Charlotte almost wailed. "What did you say in the note? What got it into his head that he ought to kill you?"

"I asked her to get out of her room and Paraiso would bring her to Clarke's to meet me," said Vernay doggedly. "I told her we'd go to the American Church and get married. I told her you would help us."

"Oh!" said Charlotte. She knew that her cheeks were bright red in two spots under her eyes. She did that when she was angry. "What else did you say I would do for her?" She was glad that her tone had been nasty.

Vernay was paying no attention to the red spots under her eyes. He was not looking at her. He still held his hand on the knob of his door and was leaning back against it.

"You see," he was saying, "I knew she'd have an awful fight with herself. She's timid, poor little thing! She's been brought up so carefully, Charlotte—not like you were brought up. She isn't bold enough to take things in her own hands. She has been sheltered all her life."

Charlotte tapped her foot on the floor. Tap-tap-tap. Accompaniment to the rain on the roof. She said—and her voice was thick with anger——

“Well, I won’t do a thing for her! I won’t get mixed up in it! I——”

“Don’t say that!” urged Vernay, putting out the hand that was not holding the knob of his door. “Don’t say that, my dear girl—for God’s sake! Because——”

Charlotte knew that her voice would not again work at her bidding. Her back was shivering. She continued to tap her foot on the floor, because she had to move with some part of her cold and trembling body. She felt acutely sick: that was it: she felt *sick*!

Vernay was speaking again:

“She didn’t answer the note, you see. I had no way of knowing what she was going to do about it. I didn’t know what had got at Paraiso until he started crying; then he said that she had slipped away from him, and that he thought . . . Oh, confound it! Charlotte—I suppose he thought that I had really asked her to come *here*!”

He was taking his hand off the knob of the door, and putting it back on the knob and clutching it violently: she could see that his knuckles turned white. He moistened his lips and looked at her deprecatingly.

“Please don’t fly off the handle, Charlotte! If you fail me—now, this minute——”

Charlotte made up her mind.

“Look here, Tom. . . . I won’t fail you: you know that.

Brace up! You look silly hanging on to the doorknob that way. Just suppose somebody came along the hall?"

But he held on to the knob. "She sent me a note while I was at dinner. . . . That thin paper they sell here, you know—crackling paper watermarked in little squares all over. You know. It'll make me sick, all my life, to see watermarks in little squares. . . ."

"What did she say?" Charlotte demanded.

"—That she couldn't. Because what little babies we might have would be born outside the Church. . . . Oh—I beg your pardon, Charlotte——"

"Never mind about that! She'd say that!" She looked speculatively at his crimsoning face. How could he be so silly as to think that there was such a thing as a happy mingling of races, when at Dolores' first open statement he could blush like this? His beautiful romance of the breath of night-blooming flowers behind garden walls had, when dragged into the light of the Club where he lived, turned into something that made him blush like a schoolboy. If things behind his closed door were as her shivering back hinted they were, she thought that all the rest of Vernay's life he would see, shining through the darkness when he put out his candles, the tragically tearful eyes of the boy who had tried to avenge his family honour. She looked at him regretfully. The rainy season was playing hob with souls.

Vernay was speaking:

"Charlotte— Oh, hell, Charlotte, come on in and see for yourself! . . . But just remember, Charlotte—she's a child,

and she doesn't realize. We've got to save her." He threw open the door and stood aside for Charlotte to pass him.

The room was dimly lit by the candles which hung on each side of the mirror. From a dark corner someone rushed forward—someone who threw herself on Vernay's breast, clinging to him, kissing his mouth which was too startled to kiss in response; Dolores, laughing, holding to him with hands that were vise-like. Charlotte wondered why Vernay had brought a second woman into the room. He was holding the girl off, fastening strong hands on her shoulders and turning her until she could see Charlotte near by. Talking to her; trying to put an end to her laughter.

"You didn't tell me how you got in?" he was urging.

But he did not wait for a reply. After all, it did not matter in what way she had managed. Dolores herself was saying, between laughter, "*No importa!*" She went on talking to him, and laughing, and paying no attention to his tugs at her shoulders; she seemed not to realize that anyone else was in the room. . . . She must sneak back to her home before morning; her father and mother and the padre would not see the joke in this! And why had he run out of the room when he came from the sala de comer and found that she had managed to pay him a visit? Was that the way, in los Estados Unidos, to treat a lady who had come on a little, amusing visit?

"Dolores——" he began.

"Ah!" She put one small hand over his mouth.

Charlotte, standing as close to the door as she could flatten herself, saw and closed her teeth on a groan.

"Ah!" said Dolores. "It was so easy! I can do this wicked thing often and often, until we sail for Spain! Are you not glad? I shall, undoubtedly, have to crawl on my knees to do the Stations: but is it not worth it, my own? Your eyes are so blue . . . !"

Charlotte leaned her bare shoulders against the cooling painted wall until her hot blood should stop racing. She pressed herself tightly against the wall. She would not move! Her hands were itching primitively. She knew it was jealousy. She knew this was her first taste of that medicine for the torpid liver, as Mrs. Jennings called it. She had not realized before that Dolores *kissed* Vernay! . . . Suddenly she understood why Vernay was so slow to settle this impossible situation and get the girl out of the Club: Vernay was overcome by the knowledge that the girl was near him and that they were alone. He had forgotten that he had forced Charlotte to come into the room. . . . She heard a roaring in her ears; there was a mist over her eyes. It was with difficulty that she listened to what Vernay was saying to Dolores:

"Listen, dear—" he was urging tenderly, "you must go home with Miss Carson. You must stay with her to-night; and to-morrow we can get the Chaplain to marry us!" There was high triumph in his voice upon the last words. "I've done everything that I can think of to please you—"

Dolores' eyes, in the dim light from the candles, were flaming again with laughter.

"Why—" she cried—"I can never, never marry you! Did you not understand?"

"Shan't we talk about that in the morning?" said Vernay gently. "And in the meantime, dear—go home with Miss Carson like a good girl?"

Charlotte was glad of an excuse for coming more directly into the light of the candles. It made her feel less like an eavesdropper. But she was met by a blaze from Dolores' eyes, by a look that froze over the face which a moment before had been soft with laughter.

"So!" said Dolores. "You cannot get away from your Americans!"

She turned her back squarely on Charlotte.

Vernay began eagerly:

"But I only asked her to come in so that she might help you!"

"So?" said Dolores again. "But I do not need the—what you call it—help."

Charlotte could not see her face, which was turned fully upon Vernay. But every line of her little back was cold and wary. Charlotte walked deliberately toward her.

"Mr. Vernay is telling you *how* I happened to come here," she began. "And now, if you will let me, I'll take you to my room for the night."

"That's right!" almost shouted Vernay in glad relief. "That's right, Charlotte! You take care of her for me! You'll go, won't you, Dolores?" And Charlotte noticed that his voice, as he spoke directly to Dolores, was coloured with indulgence. He took the hand that hung slackly at Dolores' side and lifted it to his lips. "You'll go, won't you? And to-morrow, when you understand what I've done—to please

you, Dolores!—you will do what I want; you will marry me; *won't* you? It is best this way: you won't have to have another row with your parents, this way. . . .”

Dolores, urged toward the door by both of these tall Americans, whirled back into the centre of the room and into the centre of the group of three. She held them both with her suspicious eyes. She demanded:

“What is it that you have done to please me?”

A shadow came into Vernay's eyes. He said:

“I have resigned my commission.”

“But I don't understand . . .” said Dolores.

“No: of course not, dear! But you will—to-morrow!”

Dolores stood still.

“Is it that you are no longer an officer?” she rapped out in her clipped Castilian. “That changes things!”

Charlotte signalled toward the door which Vernay had half opened.

“Tom, if we are to get out of here without anyone seeing us——” she began.

Looking back on it, she never could see how they *had* got out unobserved.

Dolores, going through the corridors of the Club, had displayed surprising discretion. She had slipped along without a rustle of her garments, without even the slip-slip of feet on the tessellated pavements; and they had caught a passing calesa at once. Charlotte, at the last moment, had insisted that Vernay stay in his room; it would make it easier if they should meet any of the Jennings's dinner party.

Dolores, in the calesa, had given an order to the cochero. Charlotte had stared in surprise.

"Do you think that that is safe?" she had asked.

Dolores had answered with a cold anger. She had said: "Safe or not, it is nothing to *you!*"

She had not spoken again until the calesa had drawn up in front of the Casa Ayala. And at her last words Charlotte's own anger had risen. Dolores had said, thrusting her head back into the calesa where Charlotte sat:

"You should be glad if I decide to leave him to his *Amante Americana! Hein?*"

BOOK III

I

SAULSBURY, back in Manila after an harrassing attempt to introduce reinforced concrete construction into the smaller cities of the Archipelago, drifted with the American tide to the offices of the *Cablenews*. A Manila day was not complete if it did not include looking in on the office of the *Cablenews*, reading the flimsies pasted on the bulletin board and, with the other idlers, discussing the news from the States. The idlers remarked bitterly:

"Damn the States, anyway! Do they think they can leave citizens out here like this? Not backed by our own government—that's what we are! Does Washington think it's decent for citizens to know that, in the event of a war with Japan, they'll be cooped up like rats in a trap? Who'll take our women and children away, I'd like to know, in that case?" And they would answer their own query: "The English and the Germans, I guess! They'll be taking their own folks off; maybe they'll cart along ours too."

Saulsbury was refreshed by this line of talk. He had heard it in the Southern Islands, but, the crowd being smaller, the chorus had not been so vociferous. He grinned as he pushed his way to the bulletin board. In order to get within reading distance—the flimsies being bad carbons—he found it necessary to shove past a tall man who had stood for longer than his share of time directly in front of the board. Immovable, the man was.

"What you think you're doing?" Saulsbury demanded, in the aggrieved whine that the climate engendered. "Hogging the game; huh? I bet you're a 'lime-juicer' Britisher, anyhow, and ain't got a bit of interest in these tidbits they send us from the dear old States!"

He pushed past the unresisting, shabby loafer, mildly curious as to what the fellow had found on the bulletin board. It was seldom that the information from home inspired spellbound silence. Baseball scores. The majority in the race for Mayor of Red Dog, Iowa. Latest doings of Alice Roosevelt. Summary of a senatorial speech on irrigation of arid tracts in the Southwest. Fashionable wedding on Long Island. Secretary of War commits himself in favor of next Army and Navy football game being in Philadelphia. Somebody hung for murdering somebody. Disastrous fire in tenement section of some city of sad tenements. Army orders: 'teenth Infantry to Honolulu, 'steenth Infantry to the Philippine Islands.

Saulsbury realized how time had gone by during his process of getting rich enough to go home. Here was Vernay's old regiment coming out again. He wondered if Vernay knew they were ordered back. He turned, at a sudden thought, and hurried after the man who had stood so immovably before the bulletin board. Having noticed that the man was weedy, that his hair was too long and his collar unhooked, and that he was generally unpleasant, he had not glanced at his face. But he reflected that he did not know, as a matter of fact, how Vernay looked these days. He had lost track of him. His own business had taken him around the

Islands, so that he had been less and less in Manila; and although he had tried upon every return to hunt Vernay up, the search had been increasingly difficult.

The slouching figure was easily discerned amid the crowd of natty Filipinos who hastened from work to what pleasures the night held in store. The man was walking slowly, his head down; one hand going, with apparent aimlessness, into a pocket and coming out again. His khaki coat had the set of a military blouse; the cut-in at the waist, the flare at the hips, was recognizable although the coat was unbuttoned. Saulsbury slackened his pace. Vernay would not be wearing uniform. Just then the man ahead, held up by the traffic, turned and looked directly at Saulsbury. Saulsbury dashed up within hailing distance and called him by name.

"Why can't you let me alone?" demanded Vernay.

On closer inspection Saulsbury saw that Vernay's coat was in reality the military blouse scantily disguised with white-bone buttons; the eyelets in the collar, through which insignia had been pinned, stared blindly, out of touch with the world. "I got mixed on your coat," Saulsbury stammered. "I mean, I——"

Vernay drew the unbuttoned coat closer over his chest in an attempt to hide the bone buttons. He looked somewhat defiantly at Saulsbury. "I found this old thing among my clothes," he explained. "It was cool and so I put it on. I didn't think I'd meet anybody I knew."

But the bone buttons had been on the blouse a sufficient length of time for the thread with which they were fastened to have become loose with many washings, Saulsbury noticed.

He walked along beside Vernay, noticing other things. Vernay reared back as he walked. That might be the mark of the Army still clinging to him, and it might be drink. Vernay's feet did not march in a straight line ahead; they wiggled along the banquetta, wobbled, had no decision in their tread down upon the pavement. They made a slipping sound as they came down, lifted for another step, again came uncertainly down. No drill left in those feet. It must be drink. Vernay's eyes were heavy and his mouth hung slackly. Saulsbury, looking furtively at his companion, suffered a recurrence of the feeling that had, of late, been worrying him—a sense of some vague danger to the youth of a fresh country—danger to his skin which crawled in the night—danger that, if he did not get out soon, would strike a spot in his body which had not, so far, been hit. Blue-eyed men had no business to be out here. It was blue-eyed men whose steps, after a while, shambled; it was fair heads which eventually hung down. Saulsbury was glad that he had never intended to stay out here forever. When he got together enough money he was going home—and, what was more, he was going to do it before it was too late.

With no agreement to that effect they had been wandering toward the Luneta. You had to go out on the Luneta in the late afternoon. What else was there to do? If you were dropping between crowds, so to speak—the army crowd kind in a way that made you see red, condescending because you were, after all, white—the navy crowd not seeing you because the only people who progressed on land instead of on water, and who were fit to speak to, were other people

in uniform—the civilian crowd boring you with politics already a month old . . . Manila, in a case like this, was doleful. You had to go home when you made money because out here there was no enjoyable way of spending it. Tom Vernay's feet slip-slipped along the pavement beside him. No push, no vim in Tom; no push, no vim in Manila; it might be the climate.

But a fellow had to have air. The Army had come down to a realization that men had to have air; the Navy had decided that men had to have air. And pleasant diversion. Air was no good when you drilled to get it. Of late the army and navy officers had, under orders, sucked in pleasing fresh air on the Luneta before band concert. They had had to get in an hour of air. Exercising by order. Those ginks did everything by order. Saulsbury derived amusement from watching dozens of intent faces, under the too-stiff caps of the Army and the too-sloppy caps of the Navy, prancing around and around the Luneta. No pleasure on the faces. Consulting wrist-watches every few minutes to see if the hour was almost up. Then around again. It was as good as a theatre back home. You could see the Army riding horses and the Navy riding bicycles . . . around and around; stopping for liquid refreshment at the Elks' Club at the end of one lap, and stopping for liquid refreshment at the University Club at the end of the next lap; and at the end of the hour repairing to the new Army and Navy Club for recuperation and forgetting.

Saulsbury, laughing uproariously, called Vernay's attention to this merry-go-round which had been thought up by the

old 'uns. "I should think you'd laugh yourself sick because you're not in it any longer! Just listen. . . . I'm not the only one who thinks it's funny!"

"Lookit them navy files on bikes 'cause they can't sit a hawse," a passing soldier was remarking; and stopped long enough to fight it out with a sailor who enquired if infantry could sit horses. The soldier had the crossed rifles of the infantry on his collar, so that this necessitated an interchange of abuse.

"I don't want to enjoy myself by order," pursued Saulsbury. "That's what's the matter with you, Tom, you know; you haven't got used to doing anything without orders. Every time you take your own head you wonder why you did it. That's because you didn't get orders to do it. You been out of the Army for about four years now; can't you forget it? Just look how you did about cement, f'instance! —Hullo!" For Vernay had shot through the air at his throat, had caught with a hand that shook, and had fallen away weakly and burst into dry sobs. Saulsbury, holding him off without difficulty, muttered to himself: "Hump! Nerve's breaking!" He glanced around to see if anyone had watched Vernay's amazing behaviour and, reassured, tried to remember what he had said on the occasion of Vernay's dive in and leap out of the cement business.

He had laughed at the figure Vernay had cut, starting in to argue the natives, the Mestizos and the rest of the piebald tribe into building concrete houses and, in the midst of the argument, bursting honestly into some remark about nipa being certainly cooler—and prettier—and also easy

to renew with only a few days' work. Who could sell that way?

"What you trying to do?" he had demanded of Vernay. "Trying to sell 'em nipa—that they can cut in the swamps? You're a fine one—you are! Was that the way you tried to sell 'em the sword? Huh? Is this your land? Did you come out here to live like the stinkin' natives, or to make money and feather your nest back home?"

"I should have said that to you," Vernay had responded.

"Who—me? But that's where you're wrong. I'm not turning native. Not much I'm not! That's just exactly what you don't seem able to understand. Now you listen to this, young feller, and try to take it in; for it's the law of the land. No man who's young is going to stay out here indefinitely without women. Get that? Here's another point: there are no girls out here a man wants to marry, if he's got sense. Oh, always excepting Charlotte and a few like her; and the law works the other way 'round for girls like Charlotte. *They* don't want to marry the men they run up on out here—their folks wouldn't know about us. So they go on home for husbands; and what's left for us who are going to stay? We take a flyer, occasionally, with little pieces of brown human flesh who don't look upon themselves as more than the marketing for the week . . . or we marry something off the China Coast. Which is worse? I'd say, the lady off the China Coast! Me for the flyers; and I'll go home, when I do go home, as good as I came out—unmarried. No clog around my neck that I'd be tempted to choke when I saw other men's wives! You think that over.

You're five years younger than I am. You won't stay out here forever with nothing in your life. Be sure you get hold of something you can shake."

A long time since Saulsbury had said this. And here was Vernay, trembling, and clutching at him with hands of futile rage. "It was all your fault!" Vernay was shrilling out. His voice cracked on his half-swallowed words, like the voice of a very young boy. "You put it in my head—damn you!"

Saulsbury had no trouble warding off Vernay's attack. One little biff on his chest, one clutch at the arm upraised to strike, and Vernay walked off the Luneta peaceably enough. Saulsbury was thinking what a rum thing it was—that men came out here with women absolutely out of the picture; and the women got in the picture by hook or crook, gummed the game and ended by downing the men. Men came out here fresh from colleges or high schools; and what did they know? They did not learn, in school, that women were a dangerous force. Very young men, in colleges, looked upon women as miracles with no guileful purpose under their wonderful hair; their eyes, blue or black or grey, were windows to souls and not to crafty brains.

"You're morbid," said Saulsbury, glancing at his companion. "Look here: I think you're getting morbid."

Vernay laughed.

"I think it's the result of that old sunstroke," said Saulsbury, going at it again.

Vernay jerked his arm from Saulsbury's steady clutch.

"Your brains were shot to pieces, someway, by that sun-stroke," persisted Saulsbury.

Vernay said: "Have it any way you like."

Saulsbury dropped it.

"Can you let me have two *pesos*?"

Saulsbury looked away as he handed out the two pesos.

"I'll pay you back," Vernay muttered. "I'm down on my luck. Been down on my luck some time."

Saulsbury was embarrassed, and resentful because he was embarrassed. "What the hell—I don't mind the dollar—but if a man don't *want* a job——"

"I'm hunting a job right now. I've been hunting a job straight along."

"Yes, you are!" Saulsbury fumed at Vernay, and at himself because he was fuming at Vernay. "Like hell you are! Here—it ain't that I mind the dollar, you know, Tom . . ."

"You sounded like it," muttered Vernay. "But I've got to have a Scotch-and-Tan! I'm all in."

"Well, come on and get the Scotch-and-Tan," Saulsbury conceded. "That's a legitimate enough excuse. I ain't down on the booze. What I am down on is your beating around the bush about a job. You haven't tried to hold one, and you know it and I know it. And a self-respecting man wants a job."

Vernay scoffed: "Shucks! You've said that a thousand times!" For a moment his vague feet took on more decision of purpose. He hurried along beside Saulsbury, stepping lightly.

Saulsbury watched him, puzzled. He knew that Vernay had tried to get jobs; but he had not recognized certain half-hearted efforts to stand irksomeness as trying to hold them. And there was another thing:

"Where you living?" he asked. "I always run across you by accident. If I hadn't 'uv run across you this afternoon I wouldn't have known whether you were alive or dead. Where you hiding yourself?"

Vernay gave him a sidelong look.

"You don't want me to know; huh?" Saulsbury growled. "Well I ain't anxious to call on you! It would just mean a loan!" He checked himself. "Oh, say! I didn't mean that, Tom! You know, don't you, that I'm always ready to help a friend out? I don't like to see a white man stranded out here, anyhow, and that's a fact!"

And Vernay again flew into a sudden rage. "I don't want your help!" he shouted. He hurled words at Saulsbury. The words of a child who thought that it had not been taken care of—thought Saulsbury, watching him and becoming more scornful. "I won't take a cent from you again," he finished.

Saulsbury argued: "You sure are shot to pieces! Come along and get that Scotch-and-Tan, and see if you can't talk like a human being!"

The table was dirty, but Vernay did not notice the sticky surface on which he rested his elbows. His chin was propped on his hands and his eyes looked straight ahead; not dodging Saulsbury's gaze; unconscious of it. They had sat for a long while over their drinks. The bodega had gradually filled.

Soldiers wandered in, sat down at tables near them and ordered drinks. Spaniards crowded the place; the type who were still hanging around Manila, who would always be in Manila—the tradesmen. But Manila still held some of the old ruling class; from the throat of one ancient man with bristling eyebrows there burst that oath of the Grandee, "*Voto á tal!*" Vernay shuddered—as if, Saulsbury remembered to have heard in his childhood, a rabbit had run across his grave.

"I thought *they* had all left!" he said.

The oath of the Grandee was submerged under words of the street and the gutter. The drinkers gurgled in the spouting wine from porrón bottles, and wiped their mouths with the backs of their hairy hands. They shouted. One, leaning back in his chair, dreamy eyed, sang while his friends kept time with their heads and rolled their eyes to the fly-specked ceiling and heaved great sighs from their chests which could be seen through half-open shirts. The wail of the song got into Saulsbury and made him think silly things. He snook it off—the song; and listened again; and thought that it might conceivably be a good thing for a man who was still young to remember his mother and sister while dancing on the Line.

Vernay too sat listening. He forgot to drink his whisky.

The sun was thinking of setting. You could tell by the lengthening shadows along the banquetta. The light, that had been a whitish yellow, and then a warmer gold, was now being mixed on the city's palette with a deep, clear blue. The stucco of the house across the street was now washed with

grey—the pearl grey of all tints when the sun sinks below the Wall. But it would still be a blaze of sunset red and green outside the Wall. The proprietor came in to light the lamps in the bodega, lit one, cocked a shrewd eye at the filtering light from the street, and put it out. The bodega remained in the dimness of half-seas over. The song started again, more wailing for the darkness of the room. Outside, in the patch of sky that showed above the mass of the Wall, a single star glowed with a mellow orange and seemed to come nearer in order to listen. In rivalry, within the bodega the ends of cigarettes showed orange in the obscurity.

The sharp striking of matches clicked with a sort of rhythm, as if the men who smoked and listened were keeping time to the song.

A soldier at a nearby table said: “Aw—don’t tell me nothin’ ’bout your comin’ from Virginia! Virginia’s a bad name out here; don’t you know that yet? Go to San Roqué and find out!”

Vernay’s hand came down on his knee—as if it meant to stay there, but it went up—and came down; and every time Saulsbury, watching, expected that the hand would stay heavily on Vernay’s knee. The song had stopped. There was a sound along the floor of shuffling feet. Shouts. “*Macarrón!*” “*Ai-i-i . . . Chucumcco!*” A deep voice yelling “*Lazunóso*”; chairs falling, rattling against each other and against the tables before they crashed to the bare floor. Saulsbury forgot to wonder why Vernay’s hand was going up and down so regularly and began to laugh at another race.

"Ain't it amusing how they'll swallow all sorts of words, and then get in a fight over *lazunóso*? Tom, can you see why 'bear-eyed' should be such an insult that they draw knives for it? Why don't they say to each other, like civilized white men—which I s'pose they are?—"Go to hell! My eyes are as clean as yours are, you poor son-of-a-bitch'?"

"Uh-huh," said Vernay.

"Been out here too long," pursued Saulsbury. "All run to seed."

"Uh-huh," said Vernay.

A burly man walked, with a mincing step, to where a wiry fellow awaited him. Coldly the burly man said: "I would speak with you, *señor*."

"I do not speak with a *ladrone*," replied the wiry man.

"Then," said the burly man, "I will wipe your eyes for you."

Saulsbury nudged Vernay. "He'd just as well have *told* him he had pig-tracks! I bet they kill each other." He leaned back, pleasantly remembering that he was an American. He had seen the fading light pick out the blades of knives. Spaniards were bouncing around the table where the wiry man had sat, and the table went down with a crash of glassware. Feet slipped in the wine that ran, in a dull-red stream, from beneath the overturned table. Spaniards were whirling, waltzing in the dull-red stream. They went over after the table and rolled in the wine which spread and mixed with another stream of a brighter red. People were fleeing into the street, pushing past the proprietor, who leaned against the door-post and watched with a perfect de-

tachment. As things quieted down he left the doorway and again lit the lamps. Filipino servants came in from the rear whence they had fled, and mopped wine from the floor and from what tables remained standing. The wine had not splashed so far as the table where Saulsbury and Vernay lingered. The more sluggish stream from the wiry man's veins crept toward them, was diverted by a knothole in the flooring, and turned off to wet the shoe of one of the soldiers.

"Gosh!" exclaimed the soldier, scraping his foot along a clean part of the floor. "Ain't they the good little fighters, *after* all? *Sword* fighters, howsomever," he qualified.

Vernay sneered: "They're strong on the right to the sword! They're strong on the *noblesse oblige* stuff! They're strong on the right to the world! Damn them!"

In the black eyes watching the tables where the Americans sat there was a cold and wary suspicion. The big fair men had neither joined in the fight nor run into the street; when the lamps were lit they showed up where they had been before the light of the sun failed the bodega. The Spaniards seemed to give up the big fair men as without either guts or discretion, and began to straggle along the street. Saulsbury could see that the meanest looking of those who had fought was being manœuvred by a girl; he watched the two figures, which had not joined each other but which had managed to suggest that they would join each other around the next corner. Saulsbury was thankful he was having a rest from all that. Of late he had been putting it another way; he had been thankful that he was done with that sort of thing. But the girl who was planning to join the burly man

from the bodega had been a peachy creature of delicious curves.

Vernay had drunk too much and was swaying in his chair. The bottle of Scotch was empty and he ordered another. His face was not flushed. But it was about this time that he got up to go. He got to his feet very steadily, but with such suddenness that Saulsbury did not collect his wits in time to accompany him. And then the soldiers talked, and Saulsbury sat listening to them. He scowled. Vernay—he had noticed it as he sat, somewhat overcome by the whisky, staring stupidly at Vernay and not thinking of the necessity of following him so as to know where he lived—Vernay, then, had walked in a daze and had knocked against the table where the soldiers were finishing their cheap vino tinto. The soldiers had looked up with scowls on their faces and had pushed back their chairs with that unmistakable rasp of anger; but the Corporal with them had held them down, all the while looking curiously at Vernay who was lurching toward the door into the street.

“Don’t you know who he is?” Saulsbury heard the Corporal mutter behind his hand. “He’s the guy that got out.”

“Oh—sure!” the soldiers muttered back, from the corners of their mouths. “When his regiment was up here, just before they got rushed down to Mindanao for that Bud Dajo fight.”

“Yeller, you s’pose?”

“Maybe he’s hittin’ the pipe at the *chinos*,” suggested one soldier.

“Didn’t look like dope to me,” replied his neighbor. “Too

crazy. His eyes looked kinder wild to me. More likely 'bino'."

They let it go at that. What matter to them? It was all in the way of foreign service.

"Loony of some kind; sure," it started up again. "Nutty. Why—the way he took it today about his regiment being ordered back to the Islands—I was standing there when he read the bulletin, and it was funny! You'd a thought he'd be glad to see his old crowd."

"We-ell," drawled the Corporal, disposing of the subject by weight of his rank, "you'd hate it yourself, wouldn't you, Smith, if you hadder been with a gang once—fightin' with 'em, eatin' with 'em, playin' poker and baseball with 'em; and just because the climate got you, you stayed out and went cit? Goin' nutty over *that* don't mean a fellow's crazy. That means a fellow's O.K., I'd say." The Corporal lit a cigarette from the stub in his mouth; frugal with matches. "Not that I care," he went on. "It wasn't my regiment. But I did hear the fellows talkin' about it. There ain't much to talk about out here," he added, apologetic at having wasted his time over a regiment which was not his regiment.

But Smith was not going to drop this chance of starting something. "'Tain't O.K. to go mutterin' to yourself, is it? 'Tain't O.K. to go sayin', over *and* over, the same thing—and to say it under your breath like you was scared at something. Is that O.K.? Tell me that!"

"Search me!" said the Corporal indifferently.

Saulsbury sat there wondering whether it would be a good thing to go over and knock that man Smith's block off or

whether, as it was just soldiers, he had best let it slide? He had heard the civilians discuss Vernay's case: of course, as this was Manila. They had wondered, frequently and loudly, why this West Pointer had shucked his doo-dads of uniform. Saulsbury brought his fist down on the table with a bang that shook a few drops from his glass: he got out of patience with these nipping, biting tongues of the clubs, the hotels, the meeting places of business. Fellows who had spent many years in the Orient, he had concluded, had a way of looking at things which did not quite appeal to him. They had lost the light touch of city men back home when discussing the foibles of their fellow men. They were by way of being acrid. No humour. Never saw anything funny about things that happened out here. He sighed, and replenished his glass to drown his commiseration for both Vernay and himself. He was sorry for any man who had to live out here where people talked.

Poor Tom! The idea of any man going crazy over a girl because she pronounced his name Tomás! For he could not see what else, in the Ayala girl, Tom had fallen in love with. Tom did not understand these Spanish women; that had been the trouble. A Spanish woman, no matter how big her eyes might happen to be, was poisonous. She worked her sex lure in order to catch the man, and having caught him she turned a right-about face and worked her always good business brains to manage his money for him; and she did it with such surpassing skill that he was forevermore dependent upon her as the guiding star of his life.

"What for—" Doña Adelina de Ayala had expounded, on

the one occasion when he had met the lady—"what for would those unwise women of your country chase the great education—which the blessed Virgin knows is not at all necessary if one has fine eyes and heavy hair, small feet and a smile of the proper blend? They will then—the women of your country—fatally accept the what-you-call-it a 'suitable allowance' from their husbands. My God! It makes me scream!"

Education—ruminated Saulsbury, almost down to the bottom of his glass—that was what was the matter with Charlotte, for instance. Nice girl. Pretty girl, too—when she had come out to the Islands. If he had not been busy thinking up schemes for bamboozling the natives, he would have fallen in love with Charlotte during those twenty-eight days on the Transport. The lazy Pacific, sliding along, up to the side of the lazy ship that was saving coal—sliding under the ship and sliding up to the horizon on the other side. The lazy sun beaming at them all day, and the lazy moon shining down on the decks at night. Flying fishes skimming over greasily smooth water which had not enough momentum to foam into whitecaps. . . . But Charlotte had been so sensible. You would think, on the face of it, that it was a good thing for a pretty girl to be sensible; but it was not. Girls ought not to have sense; and the trouble was, they had it. American girls, Spanish girls, even these little brown Filipino girls: they all had sense when you least expected it. Shrewdness, rather; and that was the worst variety of sense, if glamour was to hold out. Charlotte had managed, with her useless sense, to get her whole world upside down. Tom

Vernay, too—his whole world was upside down; but that was because he did not have sense which could hold a candle to woman-sense. Saulsbury gurgled into his tumbler which was tilted to cover his nose, the last drops of the whisky being slow to run over the obstruction of the thick, barrel-cut Spanish glass. If Tom had had any sense he would have seen what was the matter with Charlotte.

Tom was the kind of man who had to hang on to some woman. Saulsbury grinned and preened himself. Then, from the dregs of the whisky, he got a clear thought. It must have been one of these things that the missionary fellows called a spiritual upheaval that Tom had had; and it takes a man longer to adjust himself to a spiritual upheaval than a woman requires for a total change of mind. A man can go forward or backward, Saulsbury said to himself, but never sideways—at least, not so quickly as a woman. It would have taken a sideways movement for Vernay to get at the idea that he needed Charlotte.

The bodega was filling up with a new lot of stout drinkers. Again the sultry air was stirred by exploding words. Saulsbury decided that he must be fortified by food if he was to sit here and listen to that bosh about pig-tracks. He clapped his hands. "Ham-and-eggs!" he ordered of the muchacho who grinned at his elbow.

"*Por qué?*" smirked the muchacho.

"For *what?* To *eat!*" roared Saulsbury. "You haven't enough sense to come in out of the rain! *Pronto! Muy pronto! Vamoose! Siggy!*"

The muchacho went to confer with the proprietor. The

proprietor came over to stand beside Saulsbury's table. He spoke long and eloquently. Saulsbury flapped his hand at the proprietor. He said: "Of course you've got 'em! Don't the hens lay out here? And if you need a pig for the ham, kill anybody in the *bodega* except me."

The proprietor shrugged his shoulders up to the top of his large and hairy ears. But Saulsbury decided not to knock him down, for the poor ignorant foreigner did not know that lunch counters should be run in connection with drinking places. He went out at the open door and stood for a while on the banquetta. He was trying to remember how to get out of the Walled City. From the bodega behind him there erupted syllables of abuse. "*Chulo!*" A chair fell over. Feet stamped. That was all right; they had said nothing as yet about bear-eyes. If they had howled *lazunóso* he, Saulsbury, would have felt impelled to go back and beat them up.

II

MRS. JENNINGS grinned up into Saulsbury's surprised face. He had not known, when she came out of the shop on the Escolta and ran full tilt into him, whether she would stop to speak or would brush past without a flicker of her long eyelashes. It was a safe bet that, when she did stop to speak, it was because of something she wanted to find out. Mrs. Jennings wore a frock with New York stamped in every line; her hat clung to her head at an angle which jeered at hats perched on the tops of other heads along the Escolta; he remembered that she had landed the week before, after the regiment's tour of home duty.

"So nothing has happened since we left?" she opened. "But that's surprising! You have all gone on living. And things were popping at such a rate when we went home, that I thought I'd get back to find every man I knew married and as happy as the fairy tales say people will be when married."

"Nobody has married," he told her.

"Then what's happened to your souls—if you won't tell me anything else? Or are you putting that question aside, in cotton wool, to think about when you go home for good?" She giggled, as she had always giggled when she was on the track of gossip. "Didn't Tom Vernay marry his Dolores?" she came at him again.

Saulsbury said, with disgust: "I don't believe she ever meant to marry him!"

"How intelligent of you," she murmured, apparently to herself. In a louder voice she said: "But I thought he resigned in order to marry her?"

"So did he think that."

Mrs. Jennings pursued relentlessly: "And she threw him over?"

"Not that." Saulsbury tried to tell it exactly, to lend the proper meaning to his words; and he was not clever with words. "She actually seemed not to know that there had been any serious idea of their marrying. She seemed as bland as a child over the whole thing. Laughing, you know. That was what hurt Vernay—her laughing way of settling it."

Mrs. Jennings frowned thoughtfully. "Did he tell you all this?"

Saulsbury shook his head. "I'd as lief tackle a rattlesnake as ask him any questions about it. I just happened to be there. It was the day he got into his new clothes. In cits for keeps, you understand. He and I walked up on top of the Wall. Just happened that way. He sort of came to himself with a jolt when we'd got up the Ramp. I'd been talking him into taking a job in my business and he'd gone off into a sort of trance—not listening to me. He's a mooney cuss! And she was up there. She gave him the once over and began to laugh herself to death at the way his clothes fitted. You know—the way a cit coat has of wrinkling, across the waist-line in the back, because a

drilled man throws his shoulders too far back and sticks his chest out too far to the front? She told him all that."

"H-m-m!" judicially said Mrs. Jennings. "Catty!"

"No," said Saulsbury fairly, "I'm not sure it was catty. She said it like a kid would—you know—bubbling out the words as if she couldn't stop laughing."

"Go on!" urged Mrs. Jennings.

"There's nothing more to tell."

"You're so stupid!" she exclaimed. "There's the whole thing to tell! How did he *feel*?"

"How do I know how he felt?" Saulsbury was impatient. This woman was a terror at pumping a man. "He didn't fight back. He was sort of dazed. You know how it is?"

"No, I don't," she stated. "I always fight back."

"Nothing to fight about," he objected. "It was just unfortunate that she hadn't made it clear to him, earlier in the game, that what had attracted her had been his brass buttons."

"And you believe that that was all?"

"Why—" he started—"what else could it have been? She was so confoundedly lucid about the way his cit coat wrinkled and the way his uniform blouse had fitted 'so pretty'! That's all she saw in him—his clothes."

"Stuff!" she exclaimed. "To be sure, those Spanish girls haven't a spoonful of brains; but at that she had some other reason. And the thing is—" she regretted—"that we'll never really know what it was. Not but what I can guess——"

"It was his clothes being a bad fit." Saulsbury maintained stubbornly.

Mrs. Jennings stamped her foot at him. "Don't say that silly thing again! You ought to know women better than that!"

"None of us know Spanish women: that's my theory," he persisted.

"A woman I know went home on the same boat with the Ayalas," she murmured. She giggled. "Yes—I knew she hadn't married him; of course. I just wanted to find out what *you* knew. They went home through the Suez. Some women have all the luck!" she sighed. "Here I tried, for two tours in the Islands, and Henry always said there wasn't any money! At any rate—the Ayala girl was bragging about her household linens that her mother had bought, and had had embroidered, before leaving Manila. Trousseau things, you understand; her dower chest, she called it. She was like a youngster with a new toy. Her mother had the husband picked out—long distance—a *Madrillano*, an officer. . . . Now: do you get the idea?"

Saulsbury said, stupidly: "Tom knew all the time that the old lady was against him."

"Then I'll tell you another thing. Mental tests, these are! There was a German officer aboard from the garrison at Tsingtao, young and—you know how *their* uniforms fit? There's a fit, if you like! Beats ours all to death. Well, then—this man fell for Dolores, and a civilian Englishman fell for her, and she picked the officer for her eye work. She

told the women on board that 'they both had blue eyes, but one of them was of a gentleman's profession.' So there you have it. The thing that attracted her to that poor silly young Vernay was the thing he gave up in order to win her. That—provided you don't know it—is what one might call life's joke on us!"

From her cheerful summing up she seemed not to have had life play a joke on her. She continued to smile at Saulsbury, her head a little to one side, her eyes half closed. "Fatter," she said. "And heavier—every way. Well, this will be about the last time our paths will cross; so I'll say good-bye." She did not offer her hand.

Saulsbury suddenly felt a devastating awkwardness. He stood on one foot and then on the other. "Well, good-bye," he ventured.

But she made no move to go. From where they stood the estuary, which cuts across the Escolta and gives it the courage to end, dragged into sight a narrow bypath; and, picking his way between blotches of slime on the bypath, a solitary figure in faded khaki was climbing up to the level of the street. The man hurried around the corner toward the Plaza Goiti.

"Down at heels," she remarked reflectively. "Down and out. And it's Tom Vernay." She glanced over her shoulder to where Saulsbury too was looking after the diminishing figure of the man. "If he's been running around with *you*——" she speculated; and left it at that.

Saulsbury denied this: "To tell the truth, I don't know

where he's living nor what he's up to." He ran after the man, who was nearly out of sight on the crowded Plaza. "Tom!"

Vernay stopped, hesitated, turned and faced Saulsbury with no welcome in his manner. "What is it now?" he asked.

Saulsbury on his own part hesitated. It had been on impulse that he had given chase. But he must say something. He could think of nothing beyond "Come along home with me. I want to talk over a lot of things."

Vernay's idea seemed more definite. "Nothing to talk over," was what he said. "Look here, Dick, if you think I'm going to stand for your spying on me—patronizing me—you're making a big mistake. I don't need your help. I'll pay back that two *pesos* when I can; and that ought to satisfy you," he insulted him. He fidgetted with his fingers, moved his feet uncertainly. He appeared to have, with the insult, reached the end of his invention. "Don't spring your damned money on me all the time!" he grumbled. He turned away. Saulsbury had seen that his mouth was trembling. Weak. Saulsbury had always suspected that he was weak. He felt disgusted pity.

"Don't be an ass; I'm not thinking about the two *pesos*. What's two *pesos* to me?"

"Nothing, I suppose," said Vernay.

"What I was going to suggest," said Saulsbury, "was this: come along home for dinner? I've good little diggin's near by—in San Miguel. Good liquor. Good *chino*. Like to have a good little talk for old time's sake. Anything on for this evening?"

Vernay looked along the street into the open space of the Plaza; beyond the Plaza to where the shabby streets of Quiapo wandered out of sight. He waited a moment before replying. "N-o," he said at last.

They walked back down the Escolta, side by side when the width of the banquette permitted, Saulsbury dropping behind when they had to go single file; he did not wish to lose sight of Vernay. He was looking at the frayed edges of Vernay's khaki which was playing a new rôle, at the white canvas shoes protruding from the long fatigue trousers; he caught the whiff, on the breeze, of sour starch caked in the ravelled edges along the worn seams. He was sorry for the poor cuss, he told himself. And then he grew impatient. Why did the fellow not get a job, whether he liked it or not; and why did he not keep it when he got it? They reached that point where the Escolta widens out to permit of its more pretentious shops and came face to face with Mrs. Jennings, who was crossing the street, running, dodging the clanging street-cars. She skimmed under the nose of a little horse who slept at the kerb, jumped for the higher elevation of the banquette, and landed in front of Vernay. For an instant she stood still, looking at him.

"H-m-m!" she said; and passed rapidly on into a shop. The shop was one of men's shoes.

Vernay shrugged his thin shoulders. "It's the first time that's happened," he remarked.

Saulsbury, sex loyalty uppermost and hating all women, hailed a calesa, the while saying gruffly: "Let's get off the blasted street! It's always full of 'em!"

His discomfort followed him into his own house, however. Vernay put his head down on a table and kept it there. It made Saulsbury weak around the knees to see him taking it that way. He clapped his hands; he could think of nothing else to do. "Whisky-soda," he ordered. He plied Vernay with the mixture. He kept up a steady flow of extraneous chatter. There was something about a man weeping that made him sick. At intervals he felt a desire to kick Vernay; and the nausea would again take hold—shake his spine—run in a quiver up his stomach to his chest—until he would feel in his throat the convulsion which was wringing from Tom that strangling sound. He hated Tom for being the means of his feeling such a convulsion. He had never wept over his own troubles. It was not suitable that a man should take it this way. "Hell's bells!" he shouted finally. "There's nothing left for me but the bottle!" He got drunk.

He had a recollection of its having rained. From the garden there came the mouldy smell of earth that when it has not been recently soaked is baking hot. He was impatient that the smell did not suggest dead leaves. This town of Manila—it smelt of every dead thing except dead vegetation. That was always living—pushing up, overnight, into life full grown. The vegetable process of dying, and returning to earth, and springing up into new life was so quick, out here where white men were the interlopers, that it seemed eternal life. When a dead leaf fell it was because a new leaf was there to take its place. . . . Eternal life of the emotions, out here; that too. He was thirty, and he was as full of this surge of something to the head as he had been

at twenty. Hot nights, sweet odours of flowers on the land breeze—this was easy to understand. But why should the sea breeze of the day—which smelt of warm salt water and stranded crabs and decaying jellyfish and drying seaweed, and all the other refuse spit up by the ocean—why should this breeze whet the passions? If he did not look out he would be one of those gosh-awful beachcombers.

“Tom—” he announced, before he could change his mind about it—“I’m going back to the States—quick!”

Vernay’s eyes were dull and red and swollen; he reached out a trembling hand for the bottle of whisky. His nails were broken down to the quick. Saulsbury noticed that the smell of sour starch from his clothes, and the smell of a man who, in a tropical land, did not take his three baths daily, made a distasteful combination. He wondered why Vernay did not realize that he should have put on clothes which had not prolonged the existence of alternate wearing and drying off from the perspiration of the wearing. He took many more drinks of whisky and lectured Vernay.

“Tom—shouldn’t wear smelly suit of clothes. Isn’t done! Always put on fresh suit of clothes.”

He tried again. He must have authority in his choice of words. “You an’ me—we’ll be—awful—if don’t change clothes. Always change clothes to be white men.”

Vernay burst into a tremendous laugh. There was a roar to his laughter that made Saulsbury jump. Saulsbury, therefore, grew irritable. “*Don’t* do that!” he fumed.

“We’re see-sawing!” howled Vernay. “Me, up in the clouds, and you with your blasted feet in the mud and liking

the stinking stuff—that's the way we started out. And look at us now! You're looking at the stars!"

"Wha's matter?" objected Saulsbury.

"There aren't any stars," said Vernay. "Don't you know that yet?"

"Huh? And *don't* shout so loud!" expostulated Saulsbury.

"Living in flower-pots, we are," Vernay pursued. He made an effort to sit straight but continually fell over on the long wicker arm of his chair. In the orifices of the wicker arm were a bottle and a half-emptied glass; and the glass rolled off and smashed on the floor. "White men out here—all living in flower-pots. Not at home. Air from the Wall smells too bad for us to take root, so we don't take root. Got to be watered with that old water from the Moat. Slimy water. Don't water our roots, and that's reason we don't have roots. No roots. We can't get our roots to grow."

"The Moat's drained now," Saulsbury informed him.

"Oh—yes. I remember. They ought to have taken dynamite to break that water into pieces so they could haul it away. *Old!* It used to be blue and green in the slime on top of it. 'Member those ripples on the greeny surface—oily ripples? They spread out slowly . . . something horrible 'way down . . . *What* was 'way down?" He shuddered in jerks. His hands, trembling, reached out for the glass that had fallen from the chair arm. But the glass was broken and he burst into tears. "Must have it—when I see that Moat! God! I can't—I *can't* go on seeing that Moat!

That woman—she made me remember . . . The tree, in the *patio*, at the Club—it had a way of laughing!” His hands fluttered over the bare arm of the chair as Saulsbury, sobered, withdrew the bottle. “The lanterns winked and blinked when the tree laughed! I remember it! . . . I don’t know who the tree was laughing at, Dick; maybe me. . . . I’m cold. If it wasn’t giving up I’d get under all the blankets in my bedding roll,” he grumbled, and flinched. He put his arm up over his eyes and reached the other hand out to Saulsbury. “Gimme the whisky, for God’s sake, Dick?” he begged. “When I’m coming to, I—I go back to the—old words. Gimme the whisky?”

It had started raining again. Saulsbury shivered too. Rain was pleasant when it came warmly down on trees back home. Oak trees, say—pretty and homelike when they were dripping wet. But rain was spooky when it spattered on the spines of cactus hedges. The heat in the room was sticky, and was more nearly cold than heat. The rain beat on the tiled roof of the house with a thundering fall . . . coming in bursts of noise . . . receding into gentle and soothing patter . . . coming again . . . breaking into staccato, seeming to laugh as the tree had laughed—at human beings. Through the open panels of the windows there came spurts of a wind as gusty as the rain. Saulsbury shut the windows, relieved to get away from the night which pushed against them. His head had cleared, in the cold of the rain, and he looked back at Vernay. Vernay seemed shrunken in his chair. Saulsbury poured out two drinks of the whisky and silently placed one back in the proper orifice of Vernay’s

chair arm. It was some time before he said to Vernay: "I want to know where you're living."

Vernay's eyes shifted.

"I want to know where to find you," persisted Saulsbury.

Vernay said: "You don't need to find me."

"Well, look here! S'pose I wanted you to—to go somewhere with me? S'pose I wanted to go to the theatre—or to those new-fangled movies that are getting out here, say? I wouldn't know how to get at you, you see."

Vernay sneered: "Where you going to find a theatre?"

"Well—ain't you going to tell me?"

"No," said Vernay.

Saulsbury, as his brain cleared, felt a mingling of curiosity and exasperated understanding. He himself would dodge old friends—if he looked as Vernay looked, these days; the difference was that he would never have allowed himself to sink to this. He was wondering what could have made Vernay so spineless, so flat. He recalled having heard that certain people, who had not found what they had searched for, and who started down hill, went to the bottom of that hill before ever they started up again. Weak men—he had decided that meant. He saw no reason for changing his mind now. Vernay was asleep in his chair, huddled in a mass of stained khaki which was too tight for him. He had developed a slight paunch, which seemed to Saulsbury—looking at his thin neck that did not fill the collar of the ex-army blouse—a joke. That was the trouble with these drilled fellows, he said to himself: when they went to pieces they really went to pieces. He wished that he knew what Vernay

was doing with himself. He lit a cigarette, and smoked, and watched Vernay for understanding. Men changed. He had said, a while ago, that he would leave Manila; Vernay had said, three years ago, that he would leave Manila, and he was still here. Men changed. And human beings could not understand one another.

Vernay had told him of the afternoon when he had climbed the Ramp for the last time;—the occasion on which they had met Dolores, and she had laughed, had broken the silence that Vernay, before and since, had kept. Vernay had told him of the way in which the smoke from the stacks of Dolores' ship, winding behind and thinning out against the sky, had made lines which copied the lines of everything in Manila. He had been almost surprised into a laugh when Vernay had said that the smoke had twiddled thumbs at him. "It's a righteous thing," Vernay had said, "that the Americans are filling in the land at the foot of the Malacon and those palms will die. Woman palms they are, leaning over to look at their reflections in the water, and cruel as women. They all signal to each other—everything in the town—behind our backs." Vernay had said that, when he came to leave the Islands, he would be thankful that Manila was a flat city and would quickly sink below the surface of the water.

This—Saulsbury reminded himself—was the talk of a great fool. He was seized with revolt at Tom Vernay's presence in his house. He went over to the wicker chair and shook Vernay. In the eyes which dodged his own eyes he read Vernay's reluctance to be in this house. It must

be far on in the night. Saulsbury had smoked many cigarettes.

"Here—get up and come on over to the lounge. You've got to sleep somewhere, I s'pose."

But Vernay had sunk back into stupor, and Saulsbury, after reasoning with his hatred of that sour-starch smell, bent to pull off the khaki suit. He would have to do it if Vernay was to settle down, and allow him to settle himself down, for the night. He braced his unsteady legs on the slippery petates which covered the floor and began to unbutton Vernay's coat. He touched it gingerly. Vernay's body was inert, and he rolled him over and pulled off the coat.

"No white collar!" he snorted wrathfully. "He ain't a white man any more!"

He shoved Vernay viciously, and Vernay's arms fell heavily down on either side of the narrow lounge. Saulsbury gave a whistle of astonishment.

"He *ain't* a white man any more! Underclothes of *sinemay!*"

He went into his bedroom and threw himself heavily down upon the bed. He felt virtuous. He had never left off white collars. . . . Outside the night blustered. Nights during the rainy season were like this—uncertain—smiling one minute with a watery, moonlit smile and frowning with dead black clouds the next. He felt cold. A chill was creeping up his back, reaching the nape of his neck where it touched the hard round pillow. He felt afraid. He had the strength for breaking away! Of course he had the strength!

But this damp, chilly night made you feel that, if something did hold you to this town, it would be with clammy tentacles. Dirty . . . But was it the wind, moaning outside, that stirred his hair? Stuff! These old houses . . . He was awakened by Vernay calling him. He went into the next room. Vernay looked at him, through a flood of the watery intermittent moonlight, with eyes which seemed glassy; Saulsbury noticed streaks of the moonlight playing across their fixed surface.

"Mud!" said Vernay heavily.

He was sitting erect, holding with his hands to the sides of the lounge.

"There's all sorts of mud," Vernay carefully explained; "and mud stinks. White men don't like the stink of mud. They come to, every now and then, and know how they hate it. I didn't mean to dive into mud when I started at West Point. I thought I'd be a knight."

Saulsbury laughed to himself in the dark.

"That's a lovely line—the skyline of the old barracks at the Point. It used to give me a feeling of something warm and beautiful around my heart. I believed I'd find that line smeared all over the Army."

Saulsbury wriggled. He felt uncomfortable, and was glad that it was dark in the room. Tom used words that sounded indecent; the feeling those words gave him made him distrust them as proper words for one man to use to another man.

The sudden dawn burst through the remnants of the night and the room turned a ghostly grey.

"My tongue's swollen," Vernay complained, "swollen at the base of it."

Saulsbury turned from the window where he had been sniffing the moisture of the drenched garden. "Get into your clothes," he ordered. "The *chino*'ll get you some breakfast."

But when he came from his bath, freshened after an unsatisfactory night, Vernay was gone.

"Humph!" he grunted. "Didn't want me to follow him."

III

AFTER a shower and a change to fresh white clothes, a man felt, for a while, that it was good to be in Manila when the heat of the day had passed. Saulsbury brought a serene spirit to dinner which, for a change, he was going to take at the Oriente. He was allowing his mind to dwell on the virtues of coco-nut pie as made at the Oriente. But here was Charlotte, down from her school in the bosque; and she took charge at once—like a fellow's nurse. Women like Charlotte gave you a certain fear, as of a woman who is in some twisted way a Fate with scissors to clip your thread of destiny. You had to reason with yourself; remind yourself that she could actually have no scissors to do you violence.

"I must talk with you," stated Charlotte. Her manner was strained; but this might come from the fact that of late years she had avoided him.

The coco-nut pie at the Oriente was good and stickily sweet; not made with eggs—eggs ruined coco-nut pie. . . . Charlotte was too high-handed with life. Life could not be arranged. But here she was, wanting him to "arrange" that she see Vernay. She walked in to dinner with him—she was stopping at the hotel. She was obviously displeased. She gave him clear reasons for her displeasure. She was displeased with the hot day just gone by, displeased with life in general, and with the aims and ambitions of men and

women. She glanced crossly at the bottles of vinegar, oils and seasonings of various and inharmonious reds that decorated the center of the small table at which they seated themselves. "They attract the admiration of the flies, at any rate," she said of the bottles. She ordered the muchacho to take the bottles away—out of her sight—out of existence—off the face of this ugly enough world. She fanned until her fine spun hair stood on end around her rather haggard and worn-out face. She stared through the window as Saulsbury stared at her.

"It's something entirely outside my work of teaching these little baboons," she explained. "I'm worried nearly to death. I planned to go home at the end of this term of enlistment with the Board—I've planned that so many times and never gone—and I shan't go, this time, until I am satisfied in my mind——"

"What have you got to worry you?" Saulsbury snorted. He knew, in his sinking heart, that she was going to tell him all about it; that nothing could stop her from telling him all about it; that her only difficulty was a shrinking from the first words of the confession. He did not want to hear it. He was cool and hungry; and by the time she finished he might be as warm as he had been all day down on the Plaza Mayor.

"It's Tom Vernay," she burst out. "It's impossible for him to stay out here any longer, Dick."

"Why? I'm going to stay."

"You?" She was impatient. "But what does it matter about your staying? . . . I mean by that, Dick, that you've

fitted in with the life. And you aren't the kind, anyway, to eat your heart out. Your heart is the sort of trifling heart, if you'll pardon my saying it, which flits from one thing to another. You couldn't be hurt by anything. No: nobody need ever worry over you." She was positive about it. She went on to say: "You know, there isn't a thing about the two of you that I don't know through and through! That's the reason I worry over poor Tom."

Saulsbury knew that this was not the whole of her reason and, in his turn, he looked out of the window. "Oh, I don't know that there's anything to worry over about him."

"Has he got a job?" she asked in a muffled voice.

"What I think," he felt around, "is that Tom's never struck his job. He isn't the job type, I mean. He moons around——"

She came back at him: "That's not against him! Maybe he's finer than the job type!"

"At any rate," he attempted to placate her, "that girl gave him such a wallop that you can't be surprised at his not having got on his feet."

Charlotte was contemptuous of this idea. "It wasn't the wallop the girl gave him. What really bruised him was his resignation."

Saulsbury was bewildered. "But you said——"

"I know what I said," she interrupted. "What I meant was this: that he doesn't miss his job of drilling dumb soldiers."

"I don't understand, then——" he felt his way.

"Oh!" she cried. "Are you too thick to see? He thinks

that he hurt something in his soul by going back on his country! That's the whole thing—he thinks it!"

"And you believe he ought to go home? That would be a good reason for his getting a long way from home, I should think!"

"I know he ought to go home. It's the only way for him to cure himself. Go home and work. Get out of sight of that flag over the Fort. I've seen him wince—during that first year when he was getting accustomed to his new way of living—and I was still in Manila . . . at retreat one afternoon when I had dragged him out to the Luneta. All those soldiers and officers, and the women and children standing at attention, facing that flag as it came down . . . I tell you, Dick, he had a drawn look! He stood there . . . he feels out of it here in Manila. At home he would know that he was still a cog in the machinery. I'm putting it badly; but I know what I mean."

"You always know what you mean!" Saulsbury grunted.

But she pinned him down. "Don't you agree with me?"

He was uncomfortable. "It's hard to say," he hedged. "Why don't you let him be? How do you know but what he's hiding out? Look here, Charlotte—confound it—you haven't any way of being sure he wants you to hunt him up! Haven't you ever heard of men who didn't want women messing around over them?" But she turned pale at that; and he was sorry and, to give himself time for thinking up a kinder suggestion, he went under the table for the fan that she had let slip from her lap. "Look here—maybe it's all right, old girl! Maybe he's just one of those artistic lunatics

who moon around by themselves, you know. Creative imagination, and all that bunk," he finished desperately.

"*You'd* call it bunk," Charlotte, on her part, settled it. "But that isn't the point, Dick. You've got to help me?" she begged, surprising him by changing to a huskier voice, a shakier smile. "You've got to help me? Who else is there to help me?"

"What is it you want to do?"

She gave him another little smile, and he noticed with acute embarrassment that there were tears in her eyes. "I hope he'll ask me to marry him," she said simply. "But I must find him, you see. If you'd just find him for me?"

"I've been away so much," he excused, "I've lost track of him. Haven't—haven't seen him for a long time."

"Ellen Halsey would know," Charlotte suggested eagerly. "She wrote me she'd run across him. She said he was down in the mouth. That's the reason," she urged, "that I decided to go home. I won't go without him," she seemed to contradict.

"I wouldn't butt in," he argued.

"Oh, yes, I *shall* 'butt in,'" she said. There was a new ring to her voice. Saulsbury, examining her face more attentively, decided that Charlotte, while she undoubtedly looked older, at the same time looked softer. If she had looked like this—he regretted—while she had had Vernay under her wing, things might have turned out differently. Maybe they might yet turn out differently. He listened again to what she was saying. Always he had had a habit of skipping a part of what Charlotte said.

“ . . . I’ve been a long time by myself up there in the hills. I’ve—*thought!* What is the use of loving a man if you won’t let everything—foolish pride, and all sorts of other things—slide, for him? To help him?”

“You might be—” He hesitated, gulped, started in again on what he felt that he ought to tell her. “—He might look different, Charlotte. How do you know whether you’d want him if you saw him now?”

He lit his cigar. Mighty good cigars they made out here. No skill necessary for making cigars, which of course was the reason they succeeded with them.

“Dick—it wasn’t his looks that I loved! It was something inside of him. It might have been his heart—which he didn’t give to me. It was something that I couldn’t understand, and that I tried to change, and that you would call his weakness but that I’m forced, for want of a better word, to call his soul. Yes—I know—” She put her hand out to him, across the table—“that word embarrasses you! So it does me! We aren’t used to talking about our souls, are we? I don’t believe much in them, to tell the truth; but what are you to do if you can’t find a word that means a better thing? Possibly, Dick, you and I aren’t made with that finer thing inside us—and are lucky because what we have isn’t the sort of thing to make shipwreck of us.”

She laughed a little, and wiped her eyes with her silly woman’s pocket-handkerchief, and reassured him: “Think, if you want to, that I’ve gone to pieces from too much solitude in that little *barrio* where my school is. But I am thankful I got that solitude.” She patted his hand. “Brace

up! I'm not going to cry any more. You see, I was crying partly over myself and my mistakes. I am afraid I was an awful creature! I nagged him, Dick, and of course that was the wrong move. I tried to make him over. Isn't it foolish to do these things?"

He was sorry for her. But he ruined it by repeating: "I wouldn't butt in on him, however."

But he went around to where Ellen Halsey still lived in the Calle Solana. There was a calesa waiting in front of the house. The shrunken horse was trying to go to sleep, and the cochero was beating it with the handle of his whip. The horse opened one eye on a world with the unkindness of which he was well acquainted, shut it, and stood in an attitude of hunched indifference. Several Filipinos stood by and joked the cochero. "Is he your father, that you do not beat him harder?" A woman lifted her child to her shoulder that he might not miss the sport.

From the house burst Ellen Halsey. A young man was with her but he was left behind by her rush. She seized the cochero by the neckband of his shirt and shook him until the shirt came off in her hands. "How dare you!" she screamed. "Right in front of a house where *I* live, you beat up an animal? Animal yourself! Monkey, and the son of a monkey! Just for that you can go on away. I won't get in your *calesa*!" She pounded him over the head with her plaited-straw bag. She put the hands that the parting of his shirt had left unoccupied in his stiff hair and pulled it. As soon as she left off the cochero, seizing the bridle of his now startled horse, made a dash for safety.

Ellen whirled upon the woman who had held up her child to see the free show. "You're a nice one!" she snorted; a remarkable noise through her impudent small nose. "Fine people! Kind to children, are you? Well, hogs can be that to their pigs!"

Her young man—he was a tall, burly fellow with a seaman's walk—laughed. "You'll be able to take care of yourself when the *lorcha* runs down to the Visayas! I've no call to be worried at leaving you behind," he shouted in his glee. "Durned if I ever heard a native cuss better!"

"I should hope!" remarked Ellen complacently. "I learned it from them; it ought to be good! I ought to have learned *something* from struggling with these lousy natives!" She noticed Saulsbury's presence for the first time and continued her discourse for his benefit. "What do you think now of Charlotte's fine idea that anything could be done with 'em? . . . Oh! I forgot! Where are my manners? Meet Mr. Forsythe—Mr. Saulsbury! Mr. Forsythe and I are going to be married next week. I didn't need much persuading that I was wasting my time. No more teaching for me! No more uplift! I'll let Jimmie here do all the uplifting he wants on the crew of his *lorcha*. He's captain of the *Cruz del Sur*," she boasted.

Captain Jimmie grinned all over his hearty face. He said: "Ain't she the limit?"

"We're from the same state, Arkansas," explained Ellen. "Now I ask you—ain't it better to try and uplift *him* than to waste my time on these natives? But what you standing

there for like a wooden image?" she interrupted herself to ask of Saulsbury. "Who—him? I don't keep up with such trash as him. If Charlotte listened to me—which she never does . . . Well, then, I did see him coming out of a torn-down-looking house in Quiapo. You go around the corner by the church, and turn to the right, and go on until you're past a *tienda* where they sell terra-cotta and pottery flower jars, and then go on down the street that leads along the Pasig. It's a house with a garden that slopes down to the water. Let's see . . . it's just next to a house where they sell junk."

She and her Captain wandered off into the dark, arm in arm. Saulsbury could hear Captain Jimmie expostulating: "Don't be so squeamish! I'm goin' to kiss you every time I want to. And I want to now!"

Saulsbury telephoned Charlotte:

"I'll take you there to-morrow—if you insist on it! But my advice is——"

"I'll expect you about five to-morrow afternoon," came Charlotte over the telephone, cool and determined.

She began at once. Her manner had the effect of a hasty choice of subject for a conversation that must be kept up.

"It will be a joy, when I get back home, to sleep in a bed that boasts an honest-to-God mattress. I've waked up so many mornings like a waffle from the rattan. They'll tell the girl who relieves me that she'll get used to it; but she won't—not if she was born on a mattress."

She looked nervously around as their calesa approached the Plaza Goiti. She stopped talking with a gasp; laughed, or tried to laugh; and started again—valiantly.

“Something happens to your point of view out here, don’t you think, Dick? I’m not Charlotte Carson, I think. I’m a boiled-down, tinctured version of what was once a girl. Maybe what I am is just an old maid!” And then what she said next surprised him to such an extent that he could only gape at her. “This part of the world might have loosened me up; and it didn’t; it just dried me up!”

“Look here, Charlotte——” He was alarmed.

She smiled. “Nothing of that sort now, Dick,” she reassured him. “What he’ll need, some day, won’t be that sort of thing. But nothing seems strange any longer. I don’t believe, Dick, that anything—anything—could surprise me.”

“What are you driving at?” he enquired uneasily. Ellen Halsey must have seen Vernay’s underclothes and gone straight home and written to Charlotte about them. That was it, of course. But it would be worse when she actually saw. It might be all right, however; maybe she would take him over and dress him up again. You never could tell about women.

“I used to kick, of course,” Charlotte was going on, talking against something in her head. “What I am driving at is this: a fat woman, who kept the first boarding house where I lived, said to me—‘Ah, well! You might get used to worse, some day! Who knows who you will marry with?’”

She gasped again and looked helplessly at him.

"Dick—" she appealed to him for something that bewildered him—"I'm talking like a fool!"

There was some woman, in a house that they were passing, who began to run scales on a tin-lined piano. This they knew was preparatory to a burst of playing. She would play, again and again, the same things—things that fell at the end and left you, your heart having turned over, at the bottom of the well of music. They looked awkwardly at each other. The music slid down to a note that did something to his back; made him feel as if a wet finger had been drawn along his spine.

The calesa jerked to a halt in front of the shop with flower pots. It was past the time for the afternoon rain and not yet the hour for the rain of early evening; and the dark green glaze of the bulging pots, which were stacked at the door and spilling over into the street, had dried and was shining. Grinning, the pots looked to be. Shapes that seemed, in their nasty fatness, to be bursting with humorous knowledge of vices on which white men had not chanced. Saulsbury grunted: here was where Vernay had got his idea of white men in flower-pots: but he shivered too. At this hour of the afternoon, when the sunset was streaming in red tatters across the city, he always felt frightened. He could not explain this fear to his satisfaction, and he would have denied its existence if questioned; but he knew that he was afraid. It must be that he was afraid of the jungle which moves at night. He knew the jungle's power; none better, of the white men out here. He was ranged on the side of masonry in its silent conflict with that growth which in a night could over-

turn the works of man. Creepy it was; but it had a certain beauty, as had all good fights. The beauty of man's final triumph over conscious nature. . . . He was startled by his thoughts. This would be acknowledging a Nature Goddess! He jumped from the calesa to get his feet down to an earth which was not conscious. It was all due to Vernay's fancy about the flower-pots!

Charlotte too was staring at the flower-pots. She was pale. He thought that there must be a conscious terror in this street. For the first time she seemed to hesitate.

"It might be—" she was saying, in what was almost a whisper—"that I brought bad luck when I stole that flower-pot."

He had not the slightest idea what she meant. He helped her from the vehicle and began to propel her in the direction of the junk shop whose interior showed dim, heaped, shabby furniture and a few antiques. "Come on!" he ordered brusquely. "Too late to turn back now!"

Ellen had said, the house with a garden sloping down to the river. . . . The Pasig, sluggish under its green sheet of water lettuces, crept behind the houses to the right. Dank heat arose from the river and descended in sickening blankets upon garden spaces which stretched from its banks to meet these houses, which had once been country seats of great families and now were shelters for up-springing natives. The garden spaces held overflow from tiendas now occupying the ground floors of the degraded residences. Broken-down bedsteads, cracked toilet sets of medallion Canton, smashed red glass tableware lay where once flowers had bloomed; and the ghosts of the flowers rattled their seed pods

above the rubbish and made Saulsbury chuckle, "Those are the only dead vegetables I've seen in Manila, by gosh!" . . .

Ellen had said, the house next the junk shop. This house too had once been fine; but now its façade grinned with senility, on its stucco cheeks was a pinky-yellow travesty of its youthful blush, and from its sunken window-eyes the lashes of the awnings had almost dropped away. Only its lines were still pure. Saulsbury thought that it was as shocking to see pure lines in this house which had aged bawdily, as it would be if a street-walker swung along with the tread she had once used in drawing rooms.

"They drop to pieces, you understand," he explained to Charlotte, "because they're built all wrong. It's a crime!"

Charlotte shrank to his side. "This can't be where he lives!" she whispered. "No! I won't have it!"

Filipinos were spilling from the houses for the expected cool land breeze. They chattered, squatting down on their haunches in the dust of the road to compare the game cocks which they had carried lovingly cradled in their arms. Their women threw stones at the dogs, who slunk by with their tails between their legs, and at the lean pigs who came from the depraved gardens to snuff around for food. Shrieks—merriment—from all of these neat people. An old crone detached herself from the crowd and hobbled toward the two Americans. Her bleared eyes squinted up at Charlotte. Upon the fine linen of Charlotte's sleeve she laid a hand as dry as a bird's claw.

"It iss the ticher who so sweetly taught my Pio!" she cackled. Her shrill laughter contradicted her words.

"Josefita!" she called. She switched her bell-skirt over her shrivelled arm and hopped toward the house next the junk shop. Beneath her skirt showed the white of many ruffles, and beneath the ruffles her brown legs stuck down to connect with flat brown feet which met the ground flatly. "Josefita!"

Josefa lumbered from the leering, senile house and walked with difficulty along the street. Upon her hip there perched astride a naked child of about a year of age. The child had the pot-belly of the rice fed and was of a shining pale yellow. Saulsbury could hear Charlotte's difficult breathing. Josefa—near enough now for her malicious smile to be discerned—hitched the baby to a safer position on her hip, swept her slender hand down over the child to come, and smirked at Charlotte.

"I am married, by a *padre, señorita!*" Her words conveyed, by her emphasis on the title, a taunt. "Mother of God! I would have done better not to have married with heem, for then I could have keeched heem out when I was sick of heem—as the *Americanos* do! But what would you? He iss of an honourable mind, although he iss *á la sopa boba*—you onderstand?—he makes no living. Me, I must run a *tienda*—'sús-Mari-'oseph!—so high-toned iss my hosband!" She threw back her small head, out of proportion with her increased body, and howled with laughter; she looked from one to the other as she laughed.

Charlotte enquired politely: "You married Estéban?"

A shade of genuine feeling passed over the tight-skinned face. She shook her head until its heavy knot of hair slipped to one side and lent a touch of her early sauciness. "*Ajaja!*"

she lamented. "He it was I lofed! True, he beāt me—but he did not drink the *wheeskey-soda*, as the white men do. That *wheeskey-soda*!" she moaned. "It iss the sin of the whites!"

She came closer to Charlotte, looking into the white girl's eyes from underneath drooping tight lids. She was the shorter of the two but she yet managed to look up from under drooping lids. "*Señorita*—be sure that you never marry with a man *onless* you can get the man you lofe!"

They were looking at each other—intently.

Josefa's large eyes now opened widely. She managed to execute one of her old switches of her head, her shoulders, her hips as she grinned at them.

"I tell you—" she laughed—"I tell you somet'ing! The Saints know it to be true. The *wheeskey-soda* iss not all that I have found to be bad about the *Americanos*! The skin, of which you think so highly, iss no good! It smells disagreeeably to my nose."

Her jet eyes glanced swiftly from one to the other and then settled full upon Saulsbury. Scorn in the jet eyes. "You, too, with your white skin—I used to curse you for that smell which would not be at home in my nostrils! I knew, in the dark, that your skin was *white*!"

"Come on, Charlotte—give this up!" Saulsbury said, desperately in earnest. He took a rough hold of Charlotte's arm and tried to draw her back along the way they had come.

Charlotte pulled away from him gently; but her face was an angry red and her mouth had set so tightly that grim

lines from her nose ran down to meet it. "The vulgarity of a girl of this sort won't stop me," she told him. "I know, more than ever, that I must take Tom Vernay away. This is no neighbourhood for him."

The child on Josefa's hip, its finger in its mouth, rolled its eyes at the strange people. The sucking of its thumb was noisy.

"Pio!" called Josefa. "Do you not wish to talk with your ticher who taught you so many fine things? And bring to me a *cigarillo*; I will have one of my hosband's *cigarillos* from the expensive *Tabacolera*, those what-you-call-it 'Alice Roosevelt.'"

A slim youth stepped from the mass of brown people. His eyes, jet like his sister's, roamed over the two Americans and over the group of his relatives. His full soft mouth, under its faint new moustache, smiled affably. He shook himself into a jauntier carriage of his white suit, stood lightly on his feet in their black-leather shoes, and passed his hands over his oiled pompadour. There was about him a hint of the precious. He began a complaint:

"I have been dressing for the *baile*," he said, "and I am late because I had to show Tomás what was to be done in the garden. He thought I would help him! Me—I was dressed up! I could not get my hands *sucio*!" He separated each word by a pause. "I told him the truth—that he iss merely a *chulo*, a *lazinóso*. He could not deny it," he concluded.

Josefa screamed with laughter. "Hear him!" she applauded. "Iss he not all-same *Americano*? . . . Ah, bah!"

She spat into the road. "*Señorita*—you once did me a bad turn, but I am even with you! When your *amante* got enough of the cold ways of white girls he turned to me! *Me!*"

"What do you mean?" Charlotte asked in a high rasp of a voice.

"Come, *señorita*: I will show you."

Walking behind Josefa's obscene shape, as she led the way around the tumbledown house into the garden, Saulsbury knew that Charlotte did not understand—and that she did understand and would not admit it to herself—and he followed her and cursed at himself that he had not stopped her. The garden was as tumbledown as the house. Empty whisky bottles, driven into the ground by the necks, edged the poor flower beds. Over the bare earth between the flower beds toppled heaps of refuse which smelt evilly, and over the refuse clucked and scratched lean hens. A dog dashed furtively at the hens, and at their shrilled protest a tall man who has been bending over the flowers lifted himself wearily. He was naked to the waist, and his torn khaki breeches, which were held up by a sash of hempen cloth, fell sloppily to where they should have been buttoned into the army legging.

"Pepa," the man said fretfully, "how do you expect me to clean up this yard when you won't tell Pio to help me?"

"Pio?" Josefa derided the idea, with a shrug of her shoulders and a wider stretch of laughter on her red mouth. "Pio iss not a broken-down white man! If you want flowers you can work for them!" She changed to anger and

snapped her thumb and forefinger at him. "*Dar prisa!* The *casa* iss to clean if things are to be ready for your child. This child I did not want; *sabe?* One was enough to keep you. It was the *padre* who kept me from knifing you—dirty white *bum!*"

She rushed at him, her misshapen body rolling from side to side of the sharp angle that her small feet made on the ground. She got her hands in the man's hair and tugged at it while he strove to push her off. Saulsbury wondered if she had forgotten their presence, and then decided that she was only too sharply aware of them. He caught an oblique glance of her eye in which the jet seemed to burn with a black flame.

He heard the man expostulate: "*Cuidado!* Pepa!" He felt Charlotte's leap away from his detaining hold on her arm. The baby, who had rolled without injury from its mother's hip, now sat up, looked around for a garbage heap, selected a Chinese radish of unwholesome aspect, and put it into its mouth. Saulsbury leadenly observed that it was a boy. Josefa's shouts were filling the air and drawing the crowd of Filipinos in from the street. They stood by, amused. "She will assuredly injure herself," they said calmly.

"To the devil with you!" Josefa was screeching. She struck the man in the face. "That iss what I think of you—now you are no longer pretty!"

The Filipinos yelled with laughter. Saulsbury began to pull Charlotte from the garden.

The night prepared to fall shiveringly down upon Quiapo. A puff of the land breeze, dropping into the vortex of the

hot garden, drenched it with Ylang Ylang. Manila opened her thousand mouths of *Dama de la Noche* and yawned with her honey-scented breath.

Saulsbury hoped that, in the dusk, Josefa had not noticed their withdrawal; but as they neared the corner of the house she shouted to them. Saulsbury could not make out her streaming words. He looked back, over his shoulder, and hoped that Charlotte had not seen. For Josefa—not a trace of rage on her smiling face, in her malicious eyes which were watching them—was fondling Vernay. She was slowly drawing her hands down his bare chest, possessively; her body leaned against him; while he stood rigid, suffering her caresses and occasionally quivering. He lifted his head and met Saulsbury's glare. Then he dropped his eyes and went past them into the house.

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